

THE  
NARROW PATH

Of Divine

T R U T H

DESCRIBED

From Living Practice and Experience  
of its three great Steps, viz.

**Purgation, Illumination & Union**

According to the Testimony of the holy Scriptures; as also of *Thomas a Kempis*, the German Divinity, *Thauler*, and such like.

Of the SAYINGS of

**MATTHEW WEYER**

Reduced into order in Three Books by J. Spee.

Unto which

Are subjoyned his Practical Epistles, done above 120 years since in the Dutch, and after the Author's Death, Printed in the German Language at *Francfort* 1579. And in Latin at *Amsterdam* 1658. and now in English.

London, Printed for Ben. Clark in George-Yard  
in Lombard street, 1683.

A. D. To the Reader.

If Job and the Psalms ( Reader ) thou  
( dost know  
Then the same truth these lines to thee  
( will shew  
God thee enlighten to find the Cross-way  
( out,  
Which Christ hath trod; thy way to  
( Heav'n, no doubt.

THE  
PREFACE  
TO THE  
READER.

Courteous Reader,

**I** Have determined to collect and put together some of the more Notable Sayings of the Holy Scripture, which make for the better understanding of this Book, that whosoever shall please to consider them, or such like, he may be able thereby more easily, and without scruple to turn over this small Treatise;

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especially if he come to those places, by which the most illuminated Matthew Wyer complained of his Inward Pains and anguish (which throughout the Book he frequently did) lest the Reader thereby be frighted from them, or should account such Pangs and Deserctions for absurd and fantastical.

Therefore, by means of these, he will remember and consider, that this way of the Cross (although now adays it be almost utterly unknown and forsaken) was e<sup>n</sup>to Christ, and all his true members alwaies accustomed and trod in. For this is that narrow way and that straight gate, by which we must enter into life: yea by this same way, viz. by sorrows, sufferings, streights, and death, our Fore-runner Jesus Christ, thorough the whole course of his life, walked even to his sepulcher; and hath made it plain to and for us all, whom he would have to be Imitators of

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of himself, for it behooved him to suffer, and so to enter into his glory. Of him *Isaiah saith*, He had no form nor comeliness, and we saw him, and he was not of an aspect, so as that we could be delighted in him; a man despised, and the least of men, a man of sorrows and knowing infirmity, &c. Observe and consider, O thou devout Reader! together with all those who truly love Jesus Christ, and desire to be Imitators of him, how narrow, and sharp, and how many Pangs, and Descriptions is this way filled with, which yet Christ entered into, after his last supper, and has left to us for an ensample. For then it was, that his Soul was sorrowful even to the death, then it was, that for very agony he sweat drops of blood, and prayed to his heavenly Father thrice, that if it were possible, that cup might pass from him; nor yet was he heard, nor was

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*any helper present with him. The wine-press was to be trodden, and the cup to be drunk down; the flood was to be waded thorough, and obedience to be yielded unto the Father, even to the very death of the cross: upon that he was hanged naked, between two Thieeves, as the incendiary & trumpeter of the seditious: presently after they divided his Garments by lot even before his eyes; many also shaking their heads at him, so that nothing else incompassed him round, but Ignominy; and Reproach, and one sorrow trod upon the heels of another. Then the Waves of afflictions were so many that they entred even into his soul ( because he was deserted of his Father ) that out of meer pressures and dereliction, he cried out with a loud voice; My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me! All which are found described at large in the Evangelists, Prophets and*  
in

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*in the Psalms, especially in the 22 Psalm, where the Prophet complains in the person of Christ: My God I called unto thee all the day, but thou wouldst not hear, I am worm and no man. Also in Psalm 60. Save me O God, because the floods have entred into my Soul, I am stuck fast in the deep mire, and there is no bottom; and so on, to the end of the Psalm. Moreover in Psalm. 88. My soul is filled with evil, and my life approacheth unto the grave, or Hell, &c. By which and the like sayings, expressing the torments of Christ, the whole Psalter with the Prophets are perfectly filled.*

*But now if thou shalt say, Christ indeed, as the Scriptures do testifie, did suffer all these things, and fulfilled them in his example, yet is it impossible that any one can imitate him in such streights and desertion; it is answered, Christ himself hath said, He that taketh*

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not up his Cross, and cometh after me, cannot be my disciple, nor is he worthy of me. *Also Peter hath said, Christ hath suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we might follow his steps. Now if this were impossible, would not these and the like Sayings, read every where, up and down the Scriptures, be in vain? But what doth Paul say? I can do all things through Christ that strengthneth me; and Christ saith, That that which is impossible with men, is possible with God. For he worketh in us both to will and to do. Yield thy self therefore to God, and commit thy cause unto him. O man, and hope in him, that he will perform and fulfill all things in thee; for he alwaies, even from the very beginning of the World, even to this very day hath put an end to the combats of his People; and he is faithful and suffereth no man to be tempted beyond what*

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what he is able to bear. Never yet did such misery touch his Elect, but he still, together with the Temptation, found out a way to escape. As it is made manifest in the Example of the Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles, who all (as also the Author of these Sayings) were led through Fire and Water, through miseries and streights, and through a total desertion (yet everyone according to his measure) so as they became as Gold purified in the fire, and were purged from their sins. Alas, how vastly great was that misery, in which David cried out and complained: the sorrows of death have compassed me about, and the torments of Hell have made me affraid, the snares of death have laid hold upon me. Also when Jeremiah, for meer anxiety and desertion, cursed the day of his nativity; as we may read them in their own places. And who can express in words that both internal

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*and external misery wherewith Job was afflicted from the Lord. Who will give unto me this (saith he) that thou mayest cover me in Hell or the Grave: My dwelling is in Hell or the grave, and I have made my bed in darkness, &c. Also in another place, by reason of his continual desertion, he openly cursed the day of his birth, as did Jeremiah, to many more such like may we turn throughout that whole book. And if any one shall yet desire more testimonies, let him search the holy Scriptures: for it is all every where full of this doctrine, that Christ and all his members even from Abel down to these times, have always trod in this path. If therefore any one shall thorough the grace of God, believe this, to him, I hope, this small treatise will be very serviceable and profitable. But unless every one himself shall hear & learn this of the Father, these testimonies nor any others will*  
never

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*never help him, no not the whole Bible with all its quotations.* Christ crucified was always a scandal to the Jews, and foolishness to the Gentiles, but to them that believe, he is the power of God: Blessed is every one, *saith Christ,* who shall not be offended in me. *Which being said, I shall now put an end to this Preface.* O Lord who by thy grace art able to kill, and to make alive, to lead down into Hell, or the grave, and to bring forth from thence again; shew to us thy mercy, and grant us freely thy Salvation. Amen

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THE

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THE  
SAYINGS  
OF  
Mat. Ueber,

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The First Book.

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CHAP. I.

**S**uch as is the state of a Man, so he understandeth the holy Scripture: if he be still in nature, he interprets their Meaning to be of natural things: but if he is ascended Higher, he understandeth them of things more Sublime: and by  
B how

how much the Higher he goes, he finds in the Scriptures so much the more Sublime Testimonies of things. Things below are the Image and Similitude of things above: if therefore a Man is still in the lowest degree, the Scripture propounds to him the lowest Matters: but if he be got up into things above, the Scriptures sheweth to him superiour Matters.

When *Paul* saith: *Not in riotous feastings, and drunkenness, not in chamberings and wantonness, &c.* in the 13 to the *Rom.* 19. That concerns a man according to the various state of his Life, either literally, or spiritually: if he liveth carnally, it is to be understood of the gross flesh: but if he liveth spiritually, flesh also is thereby meant; but a more refined sort of flesh, to which also he must die: But before he can die to it, it's Necessary he should first have lived thereunto; and he cannot first have lived thereunto, unless first he hath died unto the more gross carnality.

It is impossible for a Man to be able to understand this Sublime way of dying, before he is come up unto that degree.

Now

Now if any one is come up thither rather in a notional understanding thereof, then in the true essence of the thing, he is in very great danger of wandering into error.

The spiritual Life of flesh is most clearly expressed in that *Rich man who lived Sumptuously and was cloathed in Scarlet*: When on the contrary, *Lazarus lay Poor, Hungry, Naked and full of Sores*. But what came it too? the highest riches were brought unto the lowest poverty, and the lowest poverty was changed into the highest Riches.

Christ sayeth, *John 12. 32. When I shall be lifted up from the Earth I will draw all unto me*: There the Earth is Purified and Glorified, and made fit for God: there then a Man abides yeilded up to God, and suffers all in God, whatsoever he shall do in him. Here therefore a Man is in a state of Passion under God, but not in a state of Action, and God possesseth him for his proper own. And if a Man doth not yet possess God as his propriety, viz. whilest he is yet alive, and not when he is dead; then is not the very bottom of

This heart as yet purged from sin; for the root of sin still is in him, and is not as yet eradicated: But at length this bottom is made manifest to the Man, and sin is accounted, and is condemned as sin. When Christ is lifted up from the Earth, then a man stands in death, and the Judgment of God cometh upon him: There the bottom of his heart is purified, and the root plucked up.

When a Man knows, that he is to omit this or that, and yet Commits it, his prayers for more Sublime gifts, are not heard, for he lifts not up pure hands. Because so long as he layeth not aside inferiour things, he receiveth no virtue to omit Higher things. As long as he hath not as yet done or omitted, that which he acknowledgeth is to be omitted or done by him, so long are hid from him the doing or omitting of more Sublime things, nor can they be acknowledged by him: But if he hath been Faithful in lower matters he shall be advanced to higher, if somethings are to be renounced by a Man, and yet he will not renounce them, then

although he prayeth yet is he not heard;  
but is forced to depart empty handed.

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## CHAP. II.

**I**F a Man abstaineth from external Idolatry, as also from the Company-keepings, Feastings, Merry-meetings, and Drinkings, from the proud Apparel, and from all such like, that spring out of sin, yet is he not so to rest satisfied: it's true indeed, that these ought to be so, that every one should omit what are to be omitted: yet this I say, that however, he is not to be at rest, or to content himself thus. For just as he who is to go to *Colen*, is not content to pass over the *Rhine* only, nor stops he there, but continueth on his journey, until he cometh to *Colen*: So also we must alwayes be going forward, and looking still further on to internal Purification, that as the external Conversation is purged, so also must the inward Foundation be purged. Now Christ alone affects that, he cleanseth the Foundation, and takes away sin, and beyond

*X Suppressed  
Latter Suppression (6)*

yond all our endeavour, or workings,  
expells it by Faith only.

If Satan was so powerful, that he could  
bring in sin, then is Christ much more  
powerful, and can both conquer and ex-  
pell it. He that experienceth the thing  
it self, how Christ expelleth sins, and  
purifieth a Man, he only truly feels the  
effect thereof.

*X* Before purgation sin may indeed be  
supposed, that it shall not break forth in-  
to fruits, yet is it still present, viz. in the  
bottom, and thence it must be removed  
and cast out, if a Man would arrive at  
Regeneration, and Righteousness be ad-  
vanced in him, which renders a Man in-  
clinable and chearful to all good whatso-  
ever, but loath and heavy to all that is  
evil: Even as before sin made the Man  
loath and heavy to good, but ready and  
chearful to evil.

If evil is not omitted by and through  
Regeneration, nor good by and through  
the same Regeneration performed, all  
things are done forcibly, with regret, a-  
gainst our wills, whatever of evil is thus  
omited, or whatever of good is thus per-  
formed

formed: for there in that case is as yet no renewing, but the old evil stock still remains, which endeavours to effect its proper works, and to produce them into act, and is quite contrary to the new Creature. But when the Victory and Regeneration is obtained, the Man then is prone to all good which he performs, and flow to every evil which he omit-teth: For whatsoever is proceeded and performed from Regeneration, that is done with delight, and if it be hindred, it breeds Sorrow or Grief.

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### CHAP. III.

**N**OW ariseth a question, *viz.* whether a Man hath also the Motions of sin after he is purified from sin, and Regenerated? The answer is this: In the mind or Foundation it self a Man hath not the Motions of sin: for if the Motions of sin were still there, then were not sin yet thoroughly taken away. But after that sin is cast out of the Mind, then it betakes it self to the Members: therefore  
all

all the Motions of sin whatsoever, that are then excited, are only done in the Members, but not in the Mind : For sin can no longer enter into the Mind, and because that Christ hath suppressed it, and cast it out thence, it must remain suppressed and rejected, else his action and work would not be constant and firm : But now Righteousness planted in the place of sin, which Righteousness is Christ, who now has taken up the Man, and worketh and performeth all the mans Commissions of good and Omissions of evil, but the man only yields up himself quietly to Christ, and he himself is at rest, and takes care of none of them which Christ both is and acteth in him, but he leaves all to Christ, to whom they belong : Moreover what praise soever or glory Springeth from hence, he ascribes all of it to Christ, but attributeth nothing to himself, because that nothing thereof did indeed belong to this performance.

Before Christ hath borne upon himself the sin of Man, and planteth himself into Man, and taketh up the Man,

it is necessary, that a man should account of himself to be yet but a sinner, and an unjust person, yea even in a pious Life, and holy conversation, although nothing should appear in him that is reprehensible, and that he by his own study shall be ascended so far, as he can ascend, even as far as it is possible for a man, by his own endeavours to come: yet that which is the most material point remains still behind, in which are placed all, *viz.* Internal Purification, and Regeneration: and this inward Purgation without all labour or endeavour of man, is completed only by Christ our Lord, so that the glory then belongs only to God, but not to Man: For otherwise, if that was not done above all power or operation of ours, it would not be done by Faith, nor would it be the work of God, nor would our Salvation consist in the Lord and by his hand, but all this would stand upon us, and in our hands; whence it would follow, that the glory was not to be attributed to God, but to our own selves. But all such opinions are removed far from a Christian; in that all these

are manifested to him, *viz.* how the matter proceedeth, and whence it ariseth, for which cause also he remaineth in his humility, without having any Gall of Bitterness; or judgment to pass upon his Neighbour. Also concerning his own experience, he speaks not with Joy, but with great grief. Therefore our Purgation, Regeneration, Exercitation, Adoration, Salvation, Wisdom; and all the rest are placed only in the hand of God; but not in our hand, and we cannot take them up when we will, but when God freely bestows them on us.

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### CHAP. III.

**I**N a man who is *purged from sin* there no longer remains *Complaint*, nor *Murmuring*, nor *Anger*, nor *Hatred*, nor *Exacerbation* upon the account of any whatsoever *adversity*, *persecution*, *suffering* or *defect*: and these good qualities proceed not out of any force, but from Regeneration; and a man does them willingly, for such is his property, nor  
can

can he do otherwise: Just as a living man must live, so that he cannot do otherwise, but lives willingly: so also the Regenerate cannot do otherwise, then fullfill the Law of God; and do his will. Nor is there any need that they should use any force to them upon this account, but all such are pleasant to them, and are performed by them with a willing mind; for this is the Property of these Persons: Just as the Hungry-man is prone to Eat, and the Thirsty to Drink, and the Sleepy to Sleep; for as much as they do all these as uncommanded and without coaction. The Lord hath no unwilling Servants, to whom his will is not pleasant: it is written in the Psalter, *Psal. 110. 3. Thy People is a willing People*, and *Psal. 40. 10. In the volum of thy Book it is written of me, that I would do thy will O my God: I am delighted because thy Law is in the midst of my heart: And Christ saith, John 4. 34. My meat is to do the will of him that sent me.*

Continency and the repulse of sins, and of the wickedness of the world, when done with a mind that is yet polluted, is

not so bitter as afterwards it is pleasant and affecteth with joy, when performed with a mind purified.

In a just and righteous man there is alwayes a desire of going forwards, yea he alwayes gets further and further on, and though he should live long, and his dayes should be almost without Number, yet would his Life, be alwayes in a proficiency, and the man would alwayes be more and more elevated in God. Now they that come up thither where they think they can abide and rest, let them esteem that for a bad sign. For by how much the more subtile or Spiritual Christians do become, by so much also they become more Sublime: and by how much the more Sublime they are, by so much the more Subtile and Sublime is their sufferings, which point is altogether unknown to them, who are yet but in some lower degree or step.

Unless God should more put a man forwards, then he doth put himself, he would never be saved, nor indeed be able to come to Regeneration. Now God hedgeth up on all sides, to an elect man,  
his

his way, that when he deviates from the right Path to his own destruction he hinders him, and sets to him his bonds, and then a man comes to acknowledge, that that was nothing but the work and Commiseration of God: and then he becomes really humble and Judgeth no man, but hath and beareth himself with a Benevolent and Merciful mind towards all men, when he can clearly discern, how much misery hung over his head, from which notwithstanding he apprehendeth himself quite freed through the wonderful mercy of God: therefore he cannot boast himself against them, being mindful alwayes of his own self: for if God hath not spared them, nor perhaps will he spare thee. And because he Shines forth with a greater grace above others, he is not lifted up above others, but rather is touched with a Commiseration and compassion towards them. So that if upon very urgent Necessity he must say some what of others, he doth it with fear and trembling, and but that the Necessity of his Neighbour should require it, he would more gladly hold his peace.

Yea

Yea oftentimes he purposeth with himself for his part, to be silent but when time and causes do drive, then in truth he is forced to speak, seeing the thing now urgeth him. And that too, not out of Envy, Hatred, or Exacerbation, but is only performed through the moving cause at least of his Neighbour. Now before this, a man did not behold others with a benigne mind, but was unmerciful, and full of taxations against others: so that if also he now sees any one that doth so, yet doth he bear all this with a willing mind.

Alas! how miserable do those men live, who seek not after God: When they have lived Thirty, Forty, Fifty, yea an Hundred Years, yet are all these passed away as it were by a blast, and so many years have slipped away in vain. It behooveth a man to be Faithful and Serious in that degree in which he is set, and the Lord will advance him yet Higher.

## CHAP. V..

**W**E must study to conform our selves to what we hear or read: and if we cannot get Higher beyond that, then cometh God, and effecteth by himself that which was impossible for us; and above our strength, and through Faith, he raiseth up, and also infuseth into us the Righteousness which availeth in his sight. All this is done by God for that Man, who hath laboured so far, as he can get no Further on; and should this Man live yet a Thousand Years; yet he could never be able to go beyond that, except God should come, and quite above his own Power, through Faith, should effectually work it, and should accomplish all things in him, which the Law requireth of him, and unto which he could not come, nor of himself attain to, until God himself should set these things before him, and in the Manner abovesaid put or help him forwards. But that God may lead a Man

up

up thither, where the Man may despair ever by his own procedure to arrive ( when as before he thought, that by his own endeavour he could go so far, as to become conformable to the Law ) God proposeth to him something for to try him, whether it be possible to come thither, as if he should say: Go too! If thou thinkest that thou art able by thy own Industry to come up thus far, I will teach thee, that it is impossible for thee: and then he shews him another Light to which a Man cannot be conformable, although his Age should extend it self till it be equal to all Ages of the World, except God should come and render him conformable to the abovesaid Light, and that above and beyond all Study, and all working or Power of his own. Now these things are to be expected from God and to be done through Faith, and then the Glory is from the Lord, but man hath nothing to boast off but in God.

That which Conscience exhibiteth to a Man, he must Satisfy it, and then his Conscience will shew unto him yet more, and so onwards until he comes into God, and is manifestly made spiritual. How

How far and High soever any one goeth forwards, yet he alwayes sees before him yet Higher and Farther, whether he thinks he may come, and where he willingly would be: for as whilst he is below he sees that above, which he is to break thorough, so also when he is Higher he seesthat that is yet Higher, which he would willingly break through: and if that was done, yet alwayes appears another, and again another; and henever comes to the end of them.

He who would never be at rest, but is still intent upon the destruction of his will, God doth not leave that Man without proficiency and advancement. A fairer Similitude there is not, then that of the Grain of Wheat, which groweth not forth out of the Earth, unless it first be corrupted and dye.

What was contrary to nature, that did I: And if I had not done it, I had not been thus advanced by the Lord.

God hath advanced me by force, wherefore it is not lawful for me to judge any one, but Mercy is to be exercised by me.

The

The most desirable advancement that excelleth all others, Consisteth in Prayers, if together therewith any one will bid farewell to lust, and will renounce wicked Cogitations.

To a young beginner all defects are laid open, out of the Scriptures and then he falls diligently to his Prayers.

The difference betwixt those who are led through Death, and those who are not yet led thorough it (neither of whom yet is contented) is this: They who are led thorough Death, have a certain bottomless pit before there eyes, by the sight of which, all that they possess, they little Esteem off, alway extending to farther things: yet are they contented thus, that they deliver themselves up wholly to the will of God, so as they acquiesce therein, and commit all to him only, so long as he is pleased to lead them thereinto, otherwise not. But they who are not yet led thorough Death, in what State or Condition soever they are, they are alwayes full of fear and terror and as yet have not yeilded up their whole cause to God, so as to acquiesce therein, in what State soever it is his will

that they remain in, but alwayes desiring  
to be put forwards, which also is the  
which the Lord will do for them, if they  
desist not from Prayers.

The Philolophers were Spectators of  
the *Israelites*, and would strive to hit the  
Mark with their arrows, but the reward  
was not given, but only to those that  
strove.

## CHAP. VI.

**T**Here were many Commandments  
given to the *Israelites*, which were  
not commanded to the *Gentiles*: so also  
when *Moses*, that is, the Light of Law  
is come in us, many depravities are dis-  
covered in us, and made manifest, which  
the *Gentiles* were Ignorant off, and did  
not think them for sin. Now as many  
sins were then detected, so also do not  
we want expiation, Sacrifice, and Sprink-  
ling, by meanes of which we may be  
purified, exiated and corrected. And  
as those things were Typically and Figu-  
ratively amongst the *Israelites* so also are  
they really and essentially among us. It

It is necessary that a Man be ingrafted into the stock of the *Israelites* if he would arrive at Regeneration, which Genealogy, stock or lineage is derived from *Adam* through all Generations. *Adam* is the Fall: *Noah* is zeal, by which every one Endeavours to lift himself up out of the Fall; where also is the Original of the great Giants. The zeal of *Noah* is that, which a Man can effect by his own proper Operation, making account, that these conduce to his Righteousness and Salvation. But then that is very displeasing to God, so that by a certain Flood poured out in Man, all these his works are drowned: This is the case which produceth so much Misery, and so great streights, as they only know, who have experienced the thing. And then all things perish, except *Noah*, that is, the Zeal of man, whom God preserveth, and takes up unto himself. This man therefore sought first to set up his own proper Righteousness, Faith, and Wisdom: But presently God cometh, and all these are drowned in a Flood, and after that the man cometh to true Righteousness, Faith, Charity

Charity and Wisdom. And these are done in man by God above all humane strength. For if Righteousness should consist in humane strength and works, the glory would not be of God, but of Man, nor would it be of Faith, above nature. But now Righteousness is set up above Nature by God, thorough Faith, which Faith also is allowed to be above the strength of man.

Zeal, which is *Noah*, then receiveth the blessing of God, above humane strength thorough the promise, after that all are perished in the Flood, which the man by means of that Zeal seemed to have gotten to himself by his own proper works and strength.

These things also are found in *Abraham*, when he Boyled with too much Zeal, nor would not wait for the promise, by which God had promised *Isaack* unto him, (that is, that Spiritual operation, granted to him out of grace above proper strength) he produced *Ishmael*, who was according to the flesh. But before he could come to that Spiritual production, it was first necessary, that the destruction

tion of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* should be brought to pass: for between the births of *Ismael*, and *Isaack* those Cityes were burned.

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## CHAP. VII.

**B**Efore sin in the very mind it self be overcome, and plainly eradicated, it must be violently suppressed alwayes, least it break out in words, deeds or in thoughts. For sin remaining in the mind, is as it were a kind of Conception, which conceives and takes hold of objects that move outwardly. For that which a man enjoys with any delight by Seeing, Hearing, Tasting, &c. and frameth to himself many Ideas and Cogitations concerning outward things, all that produceth sin, which sits upon the mind: Now if this should be rooted out, these Forreign outward objects would have in man no more any Lover.

That man formeth to himself so many Cogitations of things Forreign Concerning either Love, or Hatred, or Honour,

our, or disgrace, or Loss, or Gain, or Eating, or Drinking, Friendship, or Enmity, all that maketh sin, which dwells in the Soul: if this were overcome, such Imaginations could not stick in the mind, for they would have no Lover, or Receiver, and therefore they would Flow out, and would not return again, for as much as they would want reception: Even as he that is neither Hungry nor Thirsty, never thinks of Meat and Drink.

When a man seeks and loves nothing but God, and not himself, his Concerns are much more pleasant, and better then they were formerly, when he could love and seek himself in God.

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## CHAP. VIII.

**I**F one seeth Worldly men in their joy and delights, he ought to bewail them, and consider: Alas! in how small and pittiful things do they build their rest: But before a Man arrives at that Humility and Meekness, he does but still Judge or Censure, reproach, and revile, saying:  
Behold

Behold those wicked Wretches, and other such like are his words: Now we are to abstain from these, using upon all occasions Commiseration in Meekness.

He which judgeth another, doth the same thing, as he which throweth a Stone against some Wall, which Reboundeth and leapeth back upon himself: He that judgeth others and presently Sayes, he is sorry for it, is not to be believed.

There can be no Judgment passed upon Spiritual things, unless one can ascend above reason. Now there is no ascending above reason, but by dying.

By this is meant, that a man understands not any thing, if he explicateth wickedly or wrongly. There is no need in the Day-time to dispute, what the day is because the day Manifesteth what it self is without the noise of Arguments: therefore those that are still in Darkness, ought not to Judge Concerning the Day, till they themselves also come out of the Darkness into the Day, and then the Day it self will declare it self, that there is no longer any need of disputing concerning it. He who possesseth the thing it self

and beholds it with his Eyes, wanteth not the explication of that thing.

*A man ought to turn his Eyes inward upon himself, so that leaving all things else, he might look only upon himself.* whatever therefore he hears or sees concerning others, yet he ought to prefer them before his own works, and to interpret them to be the better, and consequently to Judge himself only, but not others. And though he be injured by others, so as they detract from his Reputation, or offend him in his Body, yet is he to look back to God alone, and all these evils are to be accepted from the hand of God, nor must he speak any thing of trouble against others, as if perhaps he should say: But this is not just: But this is not Christian, we must always do rightly, &c. If I say, we must not plainly say so, nor must any injury come from him, but it becometh him to be of a good-will towards all, and it behooveth him to look upon all with Commiseration, and a pleasant countenance nor is he to think, that if an injury is done to him, and therefore no man is to be hated, nor judged by him. And if any one takes away his goods, he

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ought

ought to think, that perhaps they belonged rather to that other Man, then to himself.

When a Man thus turns away his eyes from all things, that he (no longer, like an Eagle (neglecting himself) looks down round about on all others,) but *Contemplates himself* with an acknowledgment of *His own proper defects*, and his own Wickedness, then is that state a secure one, and a sign of true humility: But before a man comes thus far, how many errors (I pray) is he involved in, and with how much difficulty must he be set perfectly loose from thence.

It does not usually happen, that one thief doth easily let go another: But he who is willing to be touched with a true Pity towards sinners, it behooveth him first of all to be purged from sins, and to be come unto Regeneration. Let therefore a man restrain his tongue by all means, and let him abstain from the praise, and from the dispraise of others, alwayes beholding his own depravity, and desiring his own purgation: Then truly he will not Observe, what is to be Done,

or omitted by Others, but he shall Judge all these in himself only. And if he shall see or hear of any unjust Matter done by others, then shall he first think thus: Alas for me! Who am I! And so let him turn from Judging of othersto Judge his own self. For until any one is come up hither, he cannot indeed get forwards, but he must remain Foolish and Rude as long as he desisteth not from them.

A Man must be touched with Pity towards his Neighbours, as the Lord took Pity on him: for the Mercy of God is stretched out over all his works.

*He who is an Elect one, knows with how Long-suffering and Mercy the Lord hath born with him, and with how much ado he bedged up his way; And his returning back unto Ægypt, and how, as it were, forced and compelled him, and consequently with a certain kind of violence ( as I may say ) he was brought unto God. Nor is he Ignorant of such Means applied to him by the Lord, and therefore he also never reveigheth with Sharpness against others, nor judgeth Sinners, but is Gentle and*

Merciful towards them, and desireth not their Deaths, but rather that God may convert them. If this is to be done towards the Viler and Harder sort of Sinners, whom no repentance toucheth, much more Gently will he act with his weak Neighbour, who being in the state of repentance, seeketh the Lord: This person surely, he deservedly beareth with in all his defects and Infirmities, and Sustaineth him, even as the Lord Sustained him, when he endured much about his Conversion: yea even as also that very Neighbour himself hath formerly Sustained and born with his errours. He that doth this, he meteth to his Neighbour in the same Measure, which was not only from the Lord, but from his Neighbour also measured to him. He who will not bear, deserves not to be born with: And he who will alwayes shew himself unmerciful, and Judge and reject others, he ought in like Manner to expect from God Indignation, Judgment, and Rejection.

## CHAP. IX.

**T**He person of any one is not to be respected, but he who is in the Person, and operateth from it, that is, God whose only is the Glory. Respect of persons is the worst of things, as if the person it self should be that, that should know and do any thing, when yet it is not the Man, but God in the Man, and therefore to him alone is due the glory of Wisdom, Justice, Virtue, Strength, Triumph, and Victory; and all these are not to be attributed unto us, but to God alone in us, and in our Neighbour: For in us nothing is to be respected, but our empty nothingness, for this only is proper to us, otherwise nothing belongs to us, neither God, nor the Creature.

Consequently also no injury can be done to us by any Man, although they should take away from us our goods and Life, yet is not that which is ours, taken from us, but that which is God's: for

our Life, Spirit, Soul, Body, and all goods are God's and not ours: Wherefore we are not to be angry, but whatever God hath ordered to Fall upon us, we must alwayes acknowledge to be well and Rightly done: Hence also no Man is to be Hated, nor are we to envy any one nor to detract from any mans reputation, but we must rather exercise mercy. Furthermore a Regenerate Man cannot be provoked to be Angry, nor to be Proud, or of a Haughty Mind, seeing he himself is purged from such like vices, and is become a New Creature, and is detained in the Regeneration, every wayes given up to God, and is contented with whatsoever God shall do with him, or determine to come upon him, either in time, or in eternity, either inwardly or outwardly, either by Means, or without Means, he receives all these from the Hand of God; and yields the whole direction of himself up to God.

God ( as is above said ) who inhabiteth in the person, is to be respected, but not the person himself, else when the person fails, he also would fail, who should respect

respect the person. Nor is God's honour attributed to him, if respect of persons should be applied : letting therefore the person go, nothing but God only is to be looked at.

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## CHAP. X.

**W**Hether a Man be freed from the Creature, is then at length acknowledged, when he Seems to be willing that it should be taken from him.

A Man gives up himself to every Creature, and to every other thing, and desires it so, as that without it he cannot live : And if so be he cannot at length obtain it, then is nature enraged, and sometimes Falls into a Disease, and the Mind is vexed with many other Cares. Let us therefore renounce all things thorough Death, and give our selves up to the dispose of God, and possess our Souls in Calmness, and true peace, and we shall have Eternal Life.

So long as a Man hath not plainly yielded

ed up to the Creature, and renounced it, the Ideas of that Creature alwayes enter in upon the Mind, but when that Creature is perfectly denyed, then the Ideas thereof vanish away.

So soon as ever any thing is yielded up, it loseth that strength it had to force a Man, and then it is an easie thing for a Man to pass it by, which before to do, did seem difficult, yea impossible.

When a Man gives up his will to God, then he belongs to God, and if so be a Man is sometimes willing to put this in Practise; and to abide by it, God doth otherwise order it for him, and will have him enjoy that which is his. Behold this comes of that free yielding up, as a Man may clearly perceive in himself, now God detains him least he should slip into worser things.

They who are lead, have not any longer any will, nor Desire, nor Choice, but God willeth, desireth, and chooseth in them.

By how much the more a Man is fixed in the Old *Adam*, by so much the more it seems Impossible to him, and by

so much the less can he believe, that he can become Righteous. So long as a Man does any thing Violently against his own Conscience, whether it be of Small, or of great Moment, yet he cannot get forwards. He that is a Transgressor in one sin, is guilty of all sins. If any one consenteth to one Temptation, all the rest present themselves, and desire to Gain that Man, as being him, upon whom they have gotten a new right or claim.

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## CHAP. XI.

**A** Man ought not to pass over that which stirs up in him some secret Impediment, if he will be Sollicitously concerned for God: or else that same secret Impediment may still remain Separated from God: and when the Man shall come to Examination, that secret of his heart shall come forth, and shew that it still hath been alive in him. Therefore is he to bear an Examination, and in the Examination this secret of his heart is.

is to be struck out, and to be mortified that so he may come unto God; nor must we at this time Fly away, but search thoroughly; and then a Man may be truly Sollicitous in God, and so exercise himself, *viz.* by laying aside all Impediments that are by Means of that Examination Detected and Manifested. And then the Man comes to a certain liberty, when thorough Examination he is proved and tryed, he can no longer be terrified at any thing. If yet somewhat remains, that without his knowledge hath lurked in his Mind, that also shall be manifested, when he repeats the Examination. Nor can a Man more rightly know, whether he be free or a Captive, then when he is thus touched; and therefore this Tryal is not an evil thing, nor also is it to be avoided, because by the help of it, occult defects are discovered, and the Man confesseth them to the Lord with Contrition, who also is able to purge him from them.

As long as a Man lives, he is under the Law: and when by his own Endeavours he is come so far, that he cannot ascend higher,

higher, yet he shall get higher, and be advanced: But it is necessary he should put forth his hand, that another may closely take hold of him, and lead him into the way, which else he will not find: that is, he must give himself up to God, so, as that he suffers him only to operate, he himself only sitting still, and Submitting himself unto God. Whatever then is performed, that is no longer done by Man, but God himself worketh above all actions of Man, or his knowledge, or Power: God acts, and Man suffers: if this be done, God by such sufferings and dyings, leadeth and exerciseth the Man, which are matters far surpassing his strength and knowledge, even as before also the thing was utterly unknown to him, nor was it possible for him to undertake such a thing, or exercise himself in it. And in this death it is that a Man is purged, and all things are taken from him, all Whatever were able to hinder in him the undertaking of the true essence. Then is all propriety and Nature renounced, for in God is no propriety, but all things ought to be of a Divine Nature, nor can any other

x = Selfhood?

proprie - proprius

other Nature be brought into God. In that death the Soul is lost: and when ever this is done, then a Man cometh to the true essential Life of God, and there Christ revealeth himself most Evidently in Man, and then there is no need to search many things concerning the Place, wherein Christ is to be worshipped, or any other such Particulars, because all these will be very perspicuous, or known, to our eyes.

The Law is fulfilled by the new Man without all dispute or Imagination, Jesus hath strength enough to be able to save and Purify a Man from sin: but Christ doth also anoint the Man thus purified with his Holy Spirit.

## CHAP. XII.

**M**ORE does not belong to a Man, then that by God's help, he may abstain from sin, and that he may have the Law for a School-master: for to enter into Death, Darkness, the Pit, and destruction, and to be brought from hence again, and to rise again into a new Life,

Life, and a new Heaven, and Light be-  
 longeth only to the Lord, who himself  
 worketh that in Man, without all action  
 of the man, and that out of meer grace,  
 which a man at the time of his Resur-  
 rection, when that New Day-break  
 Shineth first upon him, most clearly ac-  
 knowledgeth. For he acknowledgeth  
 it was the alone Mercy of God, which so  
 exerciseth him, and brought him back  
 from Death to Life, which Mercy he  
 could not acknowledge, when he was still  
 under the Law, for there his Propriety,  
 and his selfness was yet present, but the  
 Commiseration of the Lord was hitherto  
 unknown to him, because he had not  
 as yet been thus exercised by God, above  
 all Operation and Power of his own,  
 that he might come to the Denial of him-  
 self, but he stood as yet under the Law,  
 being touched by no Death, when he  
 thought that a reward ought to be Given  
 him out of Desert, but not out of Grace;  
 and then it was, that he sought to Esta-  
 blish his own Righteousness, but such a  
 Righteousness was unknown to him,  
 which above and beyond all his own  
 Operation

Operation and Power was settled only by Faith in Christ, which Faith is acquired only in Death, Darknes, and Hell of the Grave.

A Man, in whom the Law hath exercised all its Power, and hath slain him, remains not in Death, but by the Resurrection of Christ is raised up again into New Life, but is not raised up again into the Old Life: for when he should hang with Christ upon the Cross, and beg to be Freed, that he might return again into that Life, he is not Heard, but he must dye then, nor can he ever be thus made alive again: but by the Resurrection of Christ, riseth into a New Life.

Here the matter is so carried, as if the Thief on the right Hand, and the other on the Left, and Christ also, did Hang Naked on the Cross in one Man, and as if he was reviled by both of them; for saith the Evengelists: Which very thing also did the Thieves, who were crucified with Him, reproach him withal. The same is here also, as if the Left-hand Thief was not willing to Dye, yet he must Dye, but the Right-hand Thief yielded

yielded himself up unto Death. Also as if the legs of the Thieves were broken, but not of Christ: and here it should be considered, how Christ received the Thief on his Right-hand, but the left ( which denoteth Nature ) also Perish unwillingly, and shall abide Eternally in Death; also how the Right-hand Thief willingly gave up himself to Death, and how he shall be Raised together with Christ unto Eternal Life. Christ said upon his Cross to the Thief on his Right-hand: *To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.* He did not say, Thou art with me in Paradise, for this could not be, so long as he had not yet dyed: but he said thus, Thou shalt be with me in Paradise, viz. When thou hast suffered Death: for it is as equally Impossible that a Man who is not yet dead, can be exalted in God, as it is Impossible; that a Hundred Pound Weight of Lead should Fly upwards unto the Sky.

The Thieves did not Nail themselves to the Cross; but they were Nailed, the Trees upon which the Thieves Hung, were cut Trees, and do signify the Old Man

Man or Nature in us: for we must dy in this cut Nature, and afterwards be revived again in Christ. All the promises of God do respect Christ: but Christ denoteth all Christians, of all whom, there is one only Head, which is Christ, who is all in all.

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### CHAP. XIII.

**G**od cometh and openeth to a Man the sence of Scripture, as it were in one Moment, like lightning, which comes, as it were in one moment, and goes away again in another, and then a Man acknowledgeth the sence of Scripture to be far otherwise, then before, when he had considered it in his own strength. And thus God can effect more in one only Moment for the truer understanding of the sence of Scripture, then all the Epistles which some can write to others. When the Light cometh, in process of time it becomes clearer and clearer, and again also it is wont to return again yet more clear, so that more is still discovered and Manifested to a man, which before now lay hid from him. If  
this

this first Claritude cometh into a man as if it were Angelical, but then forward it rusheth in, much clearer, and so a Man gets from one degree of Angelical Claritude to another Higher degree of the same, and then presently he ascendeth yet Higher, until he arriveth at the Claritude or Light, which is God himself, without the Interposition of the light Angelical: and then God co-uniteth all the foregoing Lights in his own Light (which is nothing else but himself) and a man is made so sure and Certain from God, who is that very Light, that this degree of his Light is God himself, and not Angelical Claritude, that he needs not ask others, who have experienced it: for God brings with him that certainty when he comes. But before this Light cometh, which is God himself, those Angelical Lights do first appear, and do as it were prepare the way for the true Light: for if this true Light should come without sending before it those enlightenings, a Man could not bear it. But the Angelical Light is such, whereby a Man rejoyceth for a short time, Just as Christ said of *John*:  
 Yea

Yea were willing to be exalted in the Light for an hour. But when Christ that Eternal Light cometh, the joy in him is not for an hour, but to all Eternity. When the Angelick Light cometh, many mistake, thinking it to be that Eternal Light, which is God himself; yet is not so, the reason of which may be observed to be this, if one cometh up to a greater Light, the foregoing is not cared for: and if yet he gets up to a Higher Light, also that that went before it, is no more accounted of. If therefore those Lights were God himself in his own Claritude, without the Interposition of the Angelick Light, it could not be otherwise, but they would be always Highly esteemed of, and would never be deprived of their Estimation.

A man who is arrived at God, is above the Angels, for he passed thorough all the Angels into the Son. A man must pass thorough a Combate, a Death, and the Grave to come unto God, wherein is no need of the Angels, in as much as they do Contemplate and use, without a Death, that Eternal good. Now the Angels

Angels were appointed unto the Service  
 of Men. When therefore a Man does  
 Contemplate on these Lights, and Revel-  
 lations, he must Sedulously beware, lest  
 he break out by speaking or reaching  
 thereof, but to wait with Silence and  
 Calmness for his Advancement, and be  
 Internally Sollicitous concerning these  
 Gifts. But if he do break forth, he mi-  
 serably hinders himself, and renders him-  
 self unworthy of these Gifts, and abuseth  
 them, and as it were Prodigally throws  
 all away with Pleasure, Singularity and  
 Pride. There are also false Lights which  
 shine in a Man, and give him an under-  
 standing, and do unfold the sayings of  
 Scripture. Yea even Satan is wont to ap-  
 pear under the Shape of an Angel of Light:  
 and all these are done in a Man. Here  
 therefore a Man is to have a care, lest  
 he mistake these for Divine Lights, and  
 if he be in doubt, whether they be Divine  
 or not, there is need only of Silence, for  
 he cannot err by being Silent, whether  
 that Light be Divine, or whether it be  
 false. But by how much the purer is the  
 Zeal of a Man, by so much the less do  
 false

false Lights vex him. For the evil Spirit  
 hath in our times appeared in many wild  
 false Revelations. As *Lucifer* that first  
 Light fell, so also the first Light which  
 cometh into a Man ought to fall and dye  
 for by that a Man may sin by loftiness of  
 Mind thorough Pride not yet eradicated.  
 Now in that Death sin is plucked up by  
 the Root; and then the true essence  
 entreteth into a Man as it is in it self, and  
 Man is transplanted into it, and it can never  
 more be extirpated, as it is promised by  
 the Prophet: *The time cometh, saith  
 the Lord, where in no more, &c.* This  
 Angelical Claritude, which a Man receiveth,  
 shews to him his Prison, and also  
 the Impurity in which he idly tumbled  
 but it doth not bring him out of Prison  
 nor takes away his Impurity from him.  
 But this Christ only doth, who draws  
 him out of Prison, and frees him from  
 his impurity: nor is that done but by de-  
 scending into Hell or the Grave. And  
 before this state of the Grave, a Man cannot  
 bear that Light which is Christ himself,  
 nor receive it, therefore Christ cometh  
 ( after that that Angelical Light hath

first inlightened his Prison, and discover-  
 ed to Man his sin) and casteth the Man  
 into Hell. And then all are taken from  
 him thorough the Fire, which made him  
 before unfit or incapable of the Eternal  
 Light of Christ. But the Man is thus led  
 thorough the Fire, that he may be puri-  
 fied, so, as all the Wood, the Straw, and  
 the Chaff in him are burned in the Fire,  
 and he himself being purged by this  
 Fire, shall be saved. He himself perish-  
 eth not in the Fire, but sin only perish-  
 eth and is rooted out, so as it can never  
 grow out again, but the Man is brought  
 out and made alive again in God. He  
 indeed also perisheth by the Fire, as to his  
 own former Life, so as that he is no more  
 revived to the world, and to sin: for he  
 is brought out thorough a Back-gate and  
 is vivified, that is, he riseth again in God,  
 and is revived in Righteousness.

As we spoke of an Angelick Claritude,  
 that it shews to a Man his Prison, toge-  
 ther with his Impurities, which then are  
 to be purified by Fire, that he himself may  
 by this means be made Capable of the  
 Eternal Light, which is Christ: so some  
 there

there be who do not rightly understand that Matter: for when that Angelick Claritude first shews to them their Prison with the Impurity, presently they think, that this lesser Light is God himself, nor do they take care, that they should first be freed from their Impurities, but with an impure Nature, they presently apprehend that Claritude, and arrogate to themselves great knowledge of Spiritual Matters, which also they do divers wayes abuse by Speaking, Writing, or Teaching, for their own Advantage, Pleasure, Glory, and Ambition: but their impurity, and their sin they account not off for sin, but for a thing Lawful; wherefore neither do their Consciences accuse them, until God himself smites them: for they ought not to abuse Claritude, but it should have served them for that end for which it was given to them, *viz.* For the acknowledgment of their sins, from which they are afterwards to be Purified by Hell or the Grave: and then at length they should have been made Capable and fit, that that Eternal Light, *viz.* God himself might have

have been received of them, nor ought they to have broke out into acts of speaking, writing, or teaching, nor to suppose themselves to be made perfect.

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## CHAP. XIII.

**A**ll the understanding of those, who abused the first Clarity, is alone derived from that Clarity, which by us termed Angelical: and indeed it is above Nature, but is by them applied to Nature, so, as that they utter things strange, which cannot be Comprehended by Natural Men: nor can any Man, by his own reason arrive at this understanding. But such are very prone to do harm, because they can move all those, who have not a true *light* ( although they have an understanding very Subtil ) as also those who are tired out from Continuing the way of the true light. And these men stand in a false liberty, nor are willing to pay Tythes to the Lord, but only the Thousand parts, and yet make no payment of either: ( by Tythes is meant

meant the outward Conversation ) in the same manner they lay down one load, and are willing to take up another, and yet carry neither. But he that walketh the true Path, doth not thus urge one thing that he may neglect another, but he bringeth forth both into use, and studieth how to render both to the *Lord*. But they, who are described above, are those false Men who admit of a false Liberty, nor can any one gain any Victory over them, or resist them, except he be one that is come to Regeneration; for such have the true essence of the thing, and in the true Light, the errors of these Libertines are held, and they are seen wherein they err, and how they go beyond all due bounds, nor do Rightly persevere. Otherwise they are above every ones understanding, and make nothing of those who would resist them, because they have a sort of Supernatural understanding which they derived from that Clarity which formerly had shined in them. He therefore that is still a Natural Man, cannot reach, nor understand them, and much less oppose himself against them, yet

though

though he be a Famous Learned Man. But he that would reach them, and oppose himself to them, and get the Victory over them, it behooveth him to be, not an Animal Man, but a Spiritual, born of God, of whom *Paul* saith: The Spiritual Man judgeth all things, &c. else let him let all disputings alone, unless he will be made a Laughing-stock: Because they are made yet more Angry and Provoked by his weak Argumentations.

We must know, that Righteousness and Unrighteousness are so alike one to the other, as are two Hairs of the same Head, but God can divide those Hairs and expose their insides to be beheld of Men. The way of happiness and the way of Unrighteousness are gone in, by the same steps, and the one leadeth to Righteousness, but the other to Unrighteousness. We have a Similitude in a great heap of Mony that makes up one certain Sum. Now if an honest just man to count it, and to give the total Sum, though he may not rightly know some pieces thereof, yet if he counts them honestly, and keeps back none of them for

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his

his own use, but compleateth the full Sum, God doth not therefore reprove him for his ingenious mind: but he who takes any piece from them, is a Thief and must expect the Judgment. Now he is the man who takes some from them who would excuse his Carnality by the help of the Scriptures.

In every Illumination, Revelation and understanding, the essence only of a thing is to be expected. A man has need to have diligent care about all that he meets with, lest he admit that which is a fault.

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## CHAP. XV.

**A** Man must Endeavour to lead an innocent and unblamable Life, which if he shall arrive, God will call him into Judgment, and will purge his floor from Sin at the bottom, the budding forth of which did formerly do much hurt to the works and thoughts of a man, thorough the Law of sin in the mind. But when sin is perished

Jud

Judgment, and is Condemned, and wholly cast out; Then indeed the mind is no longer Subject unto the Law of sin, but is free both from it, and its slavery, and is now become subject to the Law of God. Concerning which *Paul* saith: *Rom. 8. 2. The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath set me free from the Law of sin, and of death.* To this belongeth also that saying in *Rom. 7. A man therefore is no longer a Servant of sin in his mind, but is set free from that Law of sin in his mind unto the Law of God: although he still serveth in his members the Law of sin.* Sin is cast out of the house, nor is it any more moved from the internal root, but it comes extrinsically into the house: Wherefore it becometh to place the Law of sin near to the gate, that the man inwardly may have converse with God, without impediment.

## CHAP. XVI.

**N**O man ought to utter forth his words in vain. All men cannot be called by the same terms, but it must be governed according to the quality of every one. To them who are rude as yet, nothing of the more Sublime Mysteries may be talked of, but they are first to be admonished, to put off their thicker outside barks: and if they accept that counsel, they may be admitted to discourses of Higher matters, and so by degrees may be yet farther proceeded with, until no Root of sin any more appeareth. But he who is not Faithful in lower matters, the more Sublime may not be proposed to him, or else the discourse would be holden to no purpose. Now no wise man does prodigally throw away his rich Merchandise, or his Money. He who has purchased his words at an easy Rate, that is, who hath by no experience, apprehended the Truth in himself, he easily bolteth them Forth which

which another can never do, to whom what he saith, cost him more dear; upon which account it is, that he utters them in such a manner as if they were cut out of his very Heart, and this he does indeed, when he certainly sees that they are not spoken in Vain, nor does beat the Air: for words are extorted from him with difficulty and pain also.

And this is the difference betwixt those who speak out of Illumination or Revelation, and those who speak out of the Essence, Substance, or Truth of the Thing: they speak with Joy and Delight, but these with Grief and Sorrow. They are defiled with Pride, but these speak out of Humility to the Glory of God alone, and the amendment of their Neighbour.

Great also is the difference betwixt those who have their knowledge and understanding only from Reading, or Hearing, and those to whom it is revealed, whose understanding is endowed by Illumination. Moreover there is another and great difference (as is above said) betwixt those who have Revelation, and

internal Illumination, and those who are come to the essence or Substance it self of the thing, and do apprehend the Truth thereof: for they have their knowledge acquired only by Illumination, and therefore understand not, what God, the Truth and Essence is by it self, until they arrive thereat themselves. They know by Illumination that the thing is, but not what the thing is, until God by his grace leadeth them so far, by and thorough Death.

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## CHAP. XVII.

**I**F any ones Heart is on the sudden pierced quite thorough, that man indeed perceives nothing of the true order of Death: but if first his Hands were cut off, next his Arms, and his Feet, and then his Thighs, and so all the Rest of his particular Members, until they come to his heart, then indeed is he made to know all degrees and the whole order of dying.

The Judgment of God reacheth all the Creatures that exist in Man, and many, whilst all is well with them, would rush into various Errours, unless the Judgment of God did hang over the Head of Man.

For every particular iniquity the Judgment of God is to be expected, for the Just God hears and sees all, and observes every word, and will punish for it: Let therefore a man fear and beware of God. Even as Christ will exercise Judgment on the Earth: so also is there a Spiritual signification of that particular, *viz.* That the very same shall be done in a man, and there also will he punish and suppress all iniquity. We have a Similitude of this in Wax. Soft wax is capable to receive all Impressions: but that which is hard must be put into the Fire. For as the Earth is reserved last for the Fire; so in like manner is the Heart of man.

If there happen to a man Reproach, Disgrace, Loss, Revilings, and other Adversities, all these are, according to Christ's Example, to be endured with Patience, nor must such Complain, or Murmur,

or Judge. Many are much troubled, if they be injured, but if they could bear it Patiently, they would do better, and please God. When a man can by his own loss, turn away the loss of another, he ought to suffer his own proper loss, that that others loss may be prevented. And this point is to be learned thorough Tribulation and Grievs, otherwise it will never bring forth fruit: They who thus desire the inward Cross, that so they may be freed from the Eternal, they also have not the inward one: and although they seek it, yet they cannot find it. They reject the external, and therefore the internal cannot be taken up by them.

The state of Christians is of all men in the Earth, the most miserable Estate, and the most Subject to sufferings. If a Christian's inside could be beheld, no man would desire his Condition. If any of the Sons of men in the whole world is made subject to afflictions, certainly that happens to a Christian, and yet notwithstanding, he seeks not how he may be freed from Death and the Cross, which belong

belong unto him. On the other hand also, if any man amongst all those who live in the World, is found to be chearful and merry, certainly that also does belong to the Christian. The countenance of Christ is so dejected and Harsh, that he who sees him, will refuse him.

It is certainly no small affliction to have all that cast away, which we have wrought for with all our Labour: yet after that, God on a Sudden raiseth up somewhat, which can stand in his Sight: and then it is, that God worketh in a man, but the man himself is at Rest from work: whatsoever then is in the man, and shineth forth from him, all that is God, and the man himself belongeth to God, and therefore we are not to look at the Person which is the man, but God who is in him, (as I may say) is made man in him, and putteth him on, and is and worketh all things in him, and Shineth forth thorough him.

A man that adhereth to the Earth, hath joy: and he that adhereth to Heaven also, hath joy: but he that is between both these, and toucheth neither of them, is affected:

affected with great Dolours, and hath nothing that may uphold him.

A man alwayes hath somewhat, which he thinks is yet to come hereafter, and he waits for it with joy: but where there is no such Expectation, there is nothing but Affliction: and even this must be sent from God into the man, if it is to beget in him any breathings. A man must come so far, that all things do forsake him, before he can be promoted further. And if this case is brought forth, as in Relation to the Groffer Creature, it afterwards returns also more subtile, as to that Claritude called Angelick: yea and more subtile as to God himself, if he can be injoyed without Angels.

Although we must thus stand in desertion, perish so often, and loose our selves as to the Creature, Angels, and God, and so every one ought by and thorough desertion to be Sowed, Corrupted, and to conceive Fruit, and again to be Sown, yet in the conclusion the buisiness will come to the best Issue and the man shall be everlastingly preserved and quieted in God, when he shall bring forth Fruit.

out of his Seed with wonderful profit and increase, and shall have an External harvest.

That the Claritude of the Apostles was so excellent and that thy did discern all much clearer then others, even that was to be Gained by them thorough many Sufferings: and their condition was conjoynd with so much bitterness, that they could not for that reason deliver themselves. An elect man liveth in affliction as a Fish liveth in Water. He that is not Dead, cannot exercise himself in the Resurrection of Christ, but before that, he must suffer Patiently, that he may be Exercised in the Passion and Death of Christ. If the Magistrate can so punish a Malefactor, that he shall transgress no more, how much more shall God do the same.

## CHAP. XVIII.

**W**E may observe a Similitude from a House which is delineated in Paper: for many goes away with their Paper-house, and cry, this is that very House, and esteem of the Portraicture of the thing, for the very thing it self, and whosoever will not esteem the figure of the House for the House it self, we must hate such, and press them down with Persecution. Moreover all that followed in succeeding Generations have added somewhat to this Figure (by the Figure is meant the Life of Christ delineated in the Scripture by the House, that very Life expressed in a man by the Imitation of Christ. )

Whatsoever is in the World, viz. Emperours, Kings, Princes, Lords, with all their Hight, Riches, Pleasure, Feastings, Drinking, Drums, Dances, &c. and all whatever can be thought of for Delight and pleasure ; Yea so also that which is lost of all, yea whatever else can be found out, are all but the Image of  
true

true things, and of the true Essence or Substance. Wherefore be ye turned from the Shadow to the Truth, whoever you be that desire to live, and to have both true Peace and true Joy to all Eternity. The whole world, and all Creatures are but the Image only of the Essence, and of the inward Truth of things: Yea, God also hath Created the Creatures in their order, so, as they may rejoyce in their corporal order, and so likewise are they the Image of the internal Truth, even as that also hath its own Spiritual order. All creatures are a type of the internal Truth, and of the true Substance, and are, as it were, the Image of a man in a Glasse.

At length there ariseth in man so great an understanding, that in fine even that also is no longer desired, when *viz.* any one desires to arrive at the true Substance or essence. There is a Clarity given, which foretelleth to a man that essence of the thing, in which he is not yet got, and to which he at last cometh. Just as a flower is a certain demonstration of the Fruit that is to come in the future.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XIX.

**W**Hen the Lord said to the younger Son, *My Son, go and Work in the Vineyard to day*, and he answered: *I go Lord*: but coming unto the Elder, he also said, *Go Work in the Vineyard*: and he answered, *I will not*: Those two Sons are but one Man. For when a man begins, he will do all, he will Suppress sin, purifie himself, he will Worship, Love, and adore God, and adhere unto him; &c. He thinks that he is able to perform all this. But when the Business comes to Trial, then a man at last apprehendeth, that he can scarcely observe the outward show of Virtue or Righteousness, and that also with much indignation and reluctancy, because he hath not that true essential Righteousness and Virtue, whence true desire springeth.

For it is essential virtue only that makes a man pleasant, and willing to do  
what-

whatsoever he is to do, and to omit, whatsoever he isto omit: and if this Virtue be essentially in him, then is he more backward and full of loathing against Vice, then he was before against Virtue, when Vice was yet in the Throne. Therefore unless the very root of Vices and of Unrighteousness, whence external wickednesses do Spring, as the Fruits of a corrupt Tree, be purged out, no true Virtue, or real and Substantial Righteousness can grow forth in a man. And therefore all men are Liars, and have only the outside-shew of Righteousness, without the true essence of the thing: for the thing comes not forth out of the mind, because the mind hath not received it: For the Heart of that man that is full of any thing, the man himself is the most Subjected servant to that thing. Also sin is not heartily or from the mind omitted ( as being yet in the mind ) though as to shew it may be omitted. I say not all this for this Purpose, that a man ought to wait so long to omit the shew of the Vices, and perform a shew of vertue, till Vice inwardly also be extirpated,

tirpated, and essential virtue Implanted: but that none should remain contented, if, as to the shew only, he omitteth Vice and have the Possession of Virtue; nor that then he account of himself for a Just man, or should think, that he hath then so fulfilled Righteousness, and to have departed from sin: For we must Earnestly Pray both by Night and by Day, that it be omitted Heartily or out of the Mind, which externally is omitted as to the shew thereof. But the truth is, that is not the work of man, but of God only: for it is not Possible for any man to extirpate sin from the Root it self, but a man can suffer only, that God may do that according to his faithful Promises. If a man could perform that thing, it would not be a constant or an abiding thing, because whatsoever a man doth, is inconstant, and is annihilated again by man: If therefore a man should suppress sin, it would again Bud forth, for the work of a man is not Permanent, or lasting, but may be broke off by others. But that which God worketh, is Subject to no Destruction.

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When he Suppresseth sin, and extirpates it, it must remain Supprest for Evermore, and Righteousness, implanted in its stead, must abide the same to all Eternity.

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## CHAP. XX.

**T**His is the meaning of the Parable of the two Sons, who should go and labour in the Vineyard, he that would not do it, he did it, that is, he came so far as to confess: that it was impossible for him to extirpate sin, and to implant Righteousness. And when he thus became deficient in himself, and despaired thereof, he waited for the Gracious promises of God, *viz.* that God himself would do that, when it proved Impossible for man to do it. And that same will, to perform, of the first Son and all his other Actions and Omissions exercised (as to shew) are prefigured by *Abraham's* begetting *Ishmael*, for he brought him forth by working, he himself doing it: but he was according to the flesh: But he could not produce *Isaac* by

by working ; for as to him, he was to wait on the Promise of God, *viz.* That God himself should work it, and he be born after the Spirit. And when these things are fulfilled, whatever is to be omitted, is omitted without labour ; and whatever is done, is done without labour, for the Lord hath willing Servants, who do all willingly and omit also, because that which at first made a man backward and loath, is extirpated, and in its room righteousness is implanted.

To resist the breaking out of sins by the law of sin, and to have a show of vertue, cannot be done with man's working, but the extirpation of sins, and the implantation of righteousness is done without mans working, according to the word of promise wch is to be expected with desire : if this shall once come upon us, it cannot be again suppressed, but must remain eternally. Before Christ, comes the Law and makes a man contrite and sorrowful, so as if a Man will submit unto it, he will desire Christ.

That which the Law shews, it does not take away ; and that which it commands,

mands, it doth not give. But at length Christ cometh and taketh away what the Law had discovered, *viz.* Sin, and he implanteth what the Law had commanded, *viz.* Righteousness; therefore Christ comes at last, and he doth all this: and then begins in man the time of the New Testament, that in him all things may be fulfilled and confirmed, which had been promised of Christ; but before this, he lived under the Law, *viz.* in the time of the Old Testament, and wanted Christ.

The Friends of God live in the continual death of the flesh, but in mind they live, and are free. To rejoyce in sorrow, and to live in death, is to take safety from ones enemies. For what enemy is greater than Death, and yet out of it how much Health springeth? for by Death we are separated from that, which came into us by the Fall of *Adam*. Before Death a man hath a Kingdom in God, but in death God hath, or giveth a Kingdom in man. Man is led against his will into this death, as Christ said unto *Peter*, *When thou wert young, thou didst Gird thy self, and went whither thou wouldst*

wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch out thy hands, and another shall bind thee, and lead thee whither thou wouldst not. A man ought not to depart from men that are his Adversaries, for being with them he is prepared, and his foundation is uncovered to him: but let him depart from those who esteem highly of him, lest perhaps he fall into Pride: to gross works, there is need of gross Instruments.

Christ saith, *Except a man leaveth, &c.* If a man must leave any thing, he ought first to have it. Thus therefore a man first hath Father, Mother, Friends, Riches, Honours of this World, and Learning. Now this forsaking is the image of those things, which also must, besides these, be forsaken: for all that is gotten out of them, viz. those fruits which are sprung forth out of the corruption of earthly things, are also to be corrupted, and consequently those good things also are to be forsaken; but out of that forsaking are still gotten other greater goods, and more high fruits, which again must be subjected to corruption, whence afterwards other fruits

fruits do come forth augmented a hundred fold. And thus Death and Corruptions, do alwayes ascend Higher and Higher, as also do the fruits, and the Life Springing from thence.

No man can apply the Craetures to that Parable, unless he himself become above the Creature. *Paul* saith, Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death? Here is to be noted, that *Paul* had not any Body of Death in that state, in which we have some such like, for as to this state, he was already Dead, nor was there need, as to that, that he should dye yet further, and the lowest of these did no longer belong unto him : for out of many Deaths, he alwayes ascended to a more Sublime Life, and as to that Life, he was again to dye, and upon this account it was, that he wore a Body of Death. And by how much the Higher he ascended into this Life, so much the Higher also was he elevated, as to new Deaths.

We forsake the Body, because we found it before in *Adam*: if also we must forsake our Soul, that also must first be found

found of us: but we find it, when we leave the Body.

A man never found himself in that which he once has lost, but that loss, dying, and Condemnation is Eternal without Redemption: But in God that is found; in God also is Redemption; but not in that, which hath Perished: Else man should stand in time, and not in Eternity, and with him would be found nothing but the old stock.

Before an elect Man comes into Hell or the Grave (of which he doth not yet know, whither he shall come thither or not) if he be then asked to renounce the Creature, he saith, yes, and doth renounce it, so, as he will never more touch it, or desire it: for God in that renunciation taketh away also the desire, so that such a one cannot and will not desire any thing more. God leadeth a man by unknown wayes; just as when one comes into a strange Country, where he knows not the way, nor understandeth the Language, nor hath any Mony, and yet he goes on still.

As long as a Man hath still left any things to fly to, so as all things have not renounced him, faith hath not yet found room in him.

## CHAP. XXI.

**T**He difference betwixt those who are in the Hell of the Happy, and those who are in the Hell of the Damned, is this, they who live in the Hell of the Blessed, bear a pure Heart and a clean Conscience, nor is there any accusation in them: O that I had done this! O that I had omitted that, &c. if one saith: Those that complain not of such things, have not been Subjected to any sufferings: it is answered to him: Ask any one who is Condemned to Death, whether or no he be not subjected to misery & sufferings, though he should confess the Judgment which he suffers to be Just, and that he is deservedly put to all Torture and Punishment, nor would he desire otherwise, when that he might Suffer: Yet nevertheless he is in Misery, and suffers the anguish

guish and pains of Death. But happy are these Condemned ones, who then at last go down into their Hell, when first they have contended Rightly with all their might or strength applied: all which particulars must precede, if any one expects to be put forwards by God. But we must labour to attain to the very Top, so as that we cannot go Higher: and then at length it is propounded to a man, that all whatsoever he hath hitherto Laboured for, and his own proper Righteousness (of which *Paul* saith 10 to the *Rom.* 3. *They seeking to Establish their own Righteousness, are not Subject to the Righteousness of God*) cannot possibly stand in the sight of God; also he must confess, that he deservedly suffers the Judgment of God, and to be cast into this Hell. And then is he Subjected to those Pains, and is filled with so many Anguishes, though his Conscience be pure, because he hath applied all his strength, that he might live according to the will of God. Which they who are in the Hell of the damned have not done, and therefore they have not this Glory, but Conscience alwayes

accuseth

accuseth them, that they are Impure: besides these sit down in the lower-most Hell, when the elect may sit in the Uppermost Hell, and suffer the Torments of this Judgment, finding refreshment neither in God, nor in the Creatures. Between the Creatures, and those who sit in the uppermost Hell, is a great Gulph, so that they can come no more unto them, nor do they desire it, because they have been renounced of the Creatures: and when that Renunciation is Past, then is the last farewell taken, that they can never more touch them, and therefore they are Separated from the Creature, and from God also. Yet they very well know, that God liveth, and that they are to be kept bound in this dark prison, which is enlightened neither by God, nor by any creature, where also they hope for no Redemption, either from God, or from the creature, nor have they any faith, but afterwards, when they have endured all this for some time, then faith begins to come, and the man thus sighs and breaths out; that I might embrace Christ with these

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my arms; O that I might see the Salvation of *Israel!* and then Christ come alwayes nearer, till he stands just next unto him; and frees him from out of this darksome prison, Death, and Hell, and transplanteth him into life, Heaven, and true Light. It is then indeed that a man apprehendeth, what that was, that Christ descended into hell, as also that he went down to the lowermost places. For the lowest places of the Earth do denote the most remote separation from God, in which a man lives in his ownness, and in which Christ cometh unto him, and leadeth him out thence together with himself. The Ancients did thus paint out the nearest hell, that a certain man sat upon him whose name was **US**, he held a Cup in his hand, offering it to a cherub that came, that they might Drink. The same **US**, is in us, when we glow with the highest zeal we possibly can, upon which we come into the hell of Tryals, and there all whatsoever is ours, is consumed, and all Egoity, and Meity, &c. and whatsoever else is flesh. And then Christ takes up this purified Man, for Christ took of W

him the pure humanity : so also a man  
ought to be pure ( which state he comes  
into in hell ) before Christ takes him up,  
and is united with him.

Before death is suffered, glory is not given  
to God, but after that, it is given to  
him. After death man is in the truth,  
but before death he is in a lie. Before  
death a man appropriates all things to  
himself, viz. life, substance, and all :  
and he thinks that these are due to him  
of right, nor that any of them can be tak-  
en from him, but by injustice. Yet he  
possesseth all in a lie, and by injustice,  
though he thinks that he doth possess  
them by right and in truth, until death  
overcomes him. And then at last all  
are acknowledged, and looked upon o-  
therwise, and all are yielded and ascrib-  
ed to God, and to him alone is glory in  
man given. And a man is delivered  
from all his own propriety, and is made  
proper to God, who possesseth him, and  
directeth him. And thus Hell is made  
heaven at last, by reason of his yielding  
up.

When the elect do come into hell, they  
will-

willingly endure it, out of Love, although it be a great torment to them. Just like him who subjects himself to sufferings for the sake of some other, whom he most dearly loveth, and desires not to be freed from those pains, although they be not small ones, so that that other may be freed from that evil. Or else, one should submit himself to poverty and want for the sake of his beloved, that his beloved may be relieved from want or indigency: and although those sufferings are great enough, yet Love renders them easy and lovely.

By how much the greater is the Death, Hell, and condemnation, by so much the greater is the Life, Heaven, and Salvation: by how much the greater is the Death, Hell, and anguish, so much the greater, and more sublime is the Heaven, and life followeth thereupon. When a man possesseth himself, therefore he loveth, seeketh, and in all things defendeth himself. But when he is given to God, he is not his own, but God's: and as before he possessed himself, now God is in the room of himself.

possesseth him. This man therefore, with all his accidents, is God's; and hath nothing no more, but all things of his are God's, yea so fully or absolutely, that if one should give to, or take away any thing from this man, or do good or evil to him, or love or hate him, all these are done to God and not to man: Moreover this man applieth not these things to himself, and therefore also cannot be angry, nor hate his adversaries, seeing that all is done, not to him, but to God. But it is proper to God, to Love, and to do good, which now do shine forth thorough this man.

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## CHAP. XXII.

**W**Hen a Man turneth his eyes inwards, he will behold sin so great within himself, that all the defects and spots of his Neighbour will appear to him small and few: yea that which belongeth to others, will in respect of his sin, by him be accounted rather for good, then for evil. But if  
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any one weigheth the sins of others in a too strict balance, and judgeth too rigorously of them, it is a certain sign, that this man doth not know himself, nor is come unto Regeneration.

How much that, which we hitherto seek, is contrary to that thing, which is truly obtained, then at length appears, when God snatcheth us away from thence, and together with *Paul*, overturns all our understanding, knowledge, and will, and whatever we have wrought, he breaks it to pieces, that all dyes with the man, and remains confounded.

Alas, how great is the misery, and how much the anguish in that same death and corruption! There flesh and blood, ( which cannot attain to the inheritance of the Kingdom of God ) are consumed, and all things perish, which a man thought to have been somewhat. But afterwards, when a man is well purged, and purified in this purgatory, then he comes to the truth of the matter, and then at length acknowledges, that whatever he thought to have had the possession of, ( before death ) to be now  
thing

thing; and that he was (before this death) in a lie: Just as it is commonly said of him, who is Dead, that he is in the truth, but we, whilst we yet live, are in a lie. All things in death proceed otherwise then before, even as if the Sun should go backwards. When *Paul* was overwhelmed, all things which before he had thought to be in being, were now perished together with his pleasure, knowledge and understanding: God rejected all, but he, ignorant of all, cryed out; Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?

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## CHAP. XXIII.

**A** Man must go as far as it is possible for him to go, and when he shall arrive at that point, that is impossible for him, he must joyn his hands, and bend his knees, and stretch out his arms, that God may do with him what he pleaseth; with whom that is possible, that is impossible with man.

A similitude we have in a Beggar: Just when one seeketh an Alms from door

to door, and it is still said to him; God look upon thee; so also is it done with a man, who falls into this misery, all creatures, to which soever he approacheth, refuse him; so that at length God only must help and save him. When all things stand at great distance, that there remains no more underpropping, or refuge, then is the Lord urged to come in: for God cometh not; unless he be urged. A man must be left naked, and stript of all things, if God only must be made his essential life and prop. Also in desertion it cannot be but God will come. When God begins to purge the floor of sin, and to root it up from the bottom, then it is, that, at last, a man begins to know himself; and he is in his own sight, what he is in truth, and what he was both before, and after that; and that which now is required is plainly another thing, then what he thought formerly, when he was still under the works of the Law: and it repenteth him much, that he ever had esteemed himself for a Godly man, because he acknowledgeth the contrary now, viz. that he hath been

been a sinner and an unrighteous man,  
 but not a good man. And now God  
 taketh violent hold on the root it self, to  
 pluck it up. But what a stroak this is,  
 any one may know, who will experience  
 the very thing it self. When a man  
 burneth with zeal, and is willing to puri-  
 fy himself, then in the end is he become  
 impure and unrighteous, for then God  
 discovers to him the very foundation it  
 self of wickedness, and sets before his eyes  
 that which was from the beginning.  
 There therefore must the man abide, and  
 stand in the examination. In that exer-  
 cise of the Cross, nothing can relieve a  
 man, and what was before told him of  
 that cross, he can not now own it, that  
 this is that very case: True indeed he  
 wisheth: O that this were it! and yet he  
 judgeth that this his suffering is plainly  
 some other thing, till God bringeth him  
 forth, as purged, or cleansed. And then  
 he is cloathed with Righteousness, and  
 is translated into the true essence: then  
 also he hath utterly lost himself, yea and  
 all that also wherein he sought himself,  
 and is made one with God, who is made  
 unto

unto him all things. Formerly he sought to save his Soul, alwayes fearing lest he should lose it: but now he stands in the hand of God, given up to God, and with him, and out of him, God doth what he pleaseth, both in time, and in eternity; for he acquiesceth in all things and desireth nothing, but that the will of God may be done in him.

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## CHAP. XXIIII.

**W**Hen sin is discovered to a man, then it seemeth to him to be as it were a Sword, at which he is frightened, and fleeth to God; and so Satan is kill'd by his own Sword. *Paul saith: From out of many sins, Righteousness is manifested: when sins are multiplied, that is, when the multitude and magnitude of sins become known to a man, then he turns his back at last upon sin, and goes to God, who delivers him from it, and in the place of sin, manifesteth to him his own Righteousness; for as sometimes many Hounds pursue after one*

Hare

Hare, when the Dogs are taken off, the Beast is freed and remains alone, so also God doth with the multitude of sins, so as they all at last leave following a man. Therefore it is written in the *Psalms*: *A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, and they shall not come near thee.* This falling of thousands and ten thousands is done in man, but it approacheth not unto a man, but he is kept upright in God, and is taken into his glory. And then he becomes as if he were not; he is, as it were, so wholly deified, that he can find nothing but God, neither himself, nor any creature. And when he is thus in an extasie and in a rapture above, then is he void of discretion and without reason. Not as though they were not still in being in him, but that he is not sensible of them, until he returns into his mind again: but it is a pain to him, that he is forced to descend again into discretion. For it was a great bitterness to *Paul*, that he was forced to return back into discretion for the sake of his Brethren.

No man understands those places of  
*Paul's*

*Paul's* fin. Experience is the mother of understanding. If one hath once tasted Hony, he needs not to be told, that Hony is Sweet. He that seeth a white thing, there is no need to say unto him, that thing is white, for he will answer, what need is there to tell me that, when I my self both see, and understand the very thing. He that hath the very thing it self stands in no need of the type or shadow of that thing.

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## CHAP. XXV.

**C**Hrist descended so low, as we also are to come down: he went no lower, but he ariseth much higher then we can: Now can we also possibly come into that depth, unless first we shall arrive at exaltation. Man hath Christ first in Nature, and alwayes receives him more sublime, yet so, as what hath gone before, is still sown again, to spring up into a more noble plant, so that at length man receiveth Christ without all or any creature. Thus man is alwayes ascending

ing by and thorough the creatures, until he hath found Christ without the creatures. A man ascends by the Angels unto the Son, who gives him up unto the Father. Generation proceeds from one degree unto another, until one climeth above all things into Eternity: and there generation endeth, for there is the eternalabyss, in which he is wholly swallowed up: and he who arrives so far, knows all things in a constant Idea, out of which God snatcheth him, and he alwayes sees most clearly, by what degrees God was present with him, and therefore he persisteth in a perpetual giving of thanks. Also in such a claritude and vision of God, he is in a perpetual death, and is, as it were, some hungry Soul to whom it is not lawful to eat of Meats set before him. But if he doth throw his life into danger and doth eat, then must he again dye a new death: therefore such kind of men are both poor and rich: for though they are in the bosome of all comfort, yet they wantall comfort, so also they, in joys, want joy, and in pleasures, want pleasure. And these are they,

they, who are poor in spirit, who have not whereon to lay their heads, and dare touch nothing, and stand they do, as it were, upon a round Globe; yet they have wings, but know it not. As to themselves, they are altogether destitute of all security: but in God's sight they are secure. Whereas they, who are secure in themselves, want security before God. This state is not the state of *Esau*, but of *Jacob*: for *Esau* hath God for his propriety, but God hath *Jacob* for his own propriety, who stands in being given up to God, because God hath made him fit, and capable, and hath reduced him to obedience, and therefore the man possesseth God with acquiescence and in the midst of all riches, and glory, he accounts himself a poor wretch, he is quietly satisfied in all things which God shall do: If he gives him Heaven, he is quietly pleased: if he cast him into hell itself, he bears it patiently, and still continueth resigned up to the will of God: also what things soever God puts upon him by other men, he receives them all as from God, and hath nothing to do with men, but

but with God, who does all these things by means of men: therefore is he at peace with all men, and can hate no man, for any adversity done unto him: for he takes it from God, and not from Man, whom he still looks upon, but as on instruments, by which God worketh, as when a trumpet soundeth, it is not the trumpet maketh the sound, but the Trumpeter. Hence it follows, that he standeth in a willing patience against all, that can happen unto him by men: so that if they hate him, blaspheme him, injury him, hinder him, punish him, revile him, detract from his reputation, take away his goods, his friends, his house, and do persecute him, captivate him, bind him on wracks, torment and kill him, he takes all these from the hand of God alone, and hath no business with men, and in all these he looks upon God only, and not upon Men; he renounceth to all persons and can take all in good part. So also on the contrary, if any one good happeneth to him from men, he takes all that also from God, because he hath taken off his eyes from  
all

all means, and hath fixed them upon God alone, he also hath no respect of persons, which God hath withdrawn from him, and hath given him the Wisdom, that he can behold God in the person of man, and can take all things from his hands. And so he can give all glory to God, and is a true worshipper of him.

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## CHAP. XXVI.

**A**Ll fear of God which any one hath, before the birth of *Jacob*, is a servile fear: and the filial fear comes not at first, but when there is a new birth.

The servile goes before, but lasteth not, and the filial follows, and abideth.

When *Esau* was born he knew nothing as yet of *Jacob*, but supposed that the inheritance of the blessing was his. First he came forth but in part, and in time was put further out, till also his feet came forth: then he looks back upon *Jacob*, and is smitten with grief, and he saw also his own danger: and yet he contrives to kill him, and to take him out of the way: but

the more he endeavours to suppress him; by so much the more does *Jacob* come forth. It is written concerning *Esau*; *Though thou shouldst build thy nest amongst the Stars, yet I will pull thee thence.* Betwixt *Esau* and *Jacob* there is no dying: for *Jacob* held *Esau* by the heel, and followed him. *Esau* is the beginning, that which follows is *Jacob*: the habitation of *Esau* was in the desert.

Moreover concerning *Esau* and *Jacob*: *Esau* proceeded from *Isaack*, which is a divine birth, yet the judgment cometh upon him: Such a thing is Righteousness in a man, upon which also cometh judgment. *Esau* hath the Righteousness of God, as if it were his propriety, and he applieth it unto his delight, and he seeketh life for himself therein, and therefore the judgment of God must come upon *Esau*, that he must lay down his life, till he comes into the state of *Jacob*, who abideth resigned up unto God, and whether God giveth, or whether God taketh away any thing, he is satisfied therewith. So soon as a Man receives a new life, he is again subjected unto judgment, and is forced to suffer death.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXVII.

**T**Hat which is moved together with the body of Christ, that is a member in the body of Christ. The humanity of Christ is a middle thing between God and us, and God cannot come into us, but by mediation of this. The feeding on the most pure body of Christ, transferreth us into a divine essence, and that food consumeth all flesh. Christ, when he had taken the Bread, said: *In doing this, ye shall declare my Death*: This is the sense, and the impression of the death of Christ, the expression of which is the declaration thereof. Hence it may be observed, what kind of food it is, to eat the flesh of Christ, and to drink his blood, viz. such as many, who formerly had been fed and filled by Christ, going back, did forsake him, when they should have come unto his food. Great is the difference betwixt the essential truth, and the notional truth: Also between the essential death, and the notional death. There is also great difference between those

those who know God in Nature, and accordingly do possess and use him, and they who know God in God, and accordingly do possess and use him: for pure nature, such as is created from God, cometh into God, without all Adamical accidents.

It is true indeed, that the *Israelites* who came out of *Ægypt*, did eat Heavenly bread in the Wilderness, yet that could not preserve them, so as that they should abide, but dye they must, as Christ said: *Your Fathers did eat the bread from Heaven, and are dead.*

When first we come out of *Ægypt*, it cometh to pass, that we can in the life of flesh, or of Nature see, know, possess, and use God, yea and hold him in our propriety, but that nature must come in to death, and be judged of God: and then we possess and know God not in the life of the flesh, or of Nature, but in the death of the flesh: and then God is possessed without appropriation, without touching, or handling: for whatever feels or touches in us, is the flesh, and is delivered up into death from God, but after-

afterwards, in a true quiet resignation,  
 God beholdeth himself in us, and there  
 knows, and loves himself, and although  
 formerly we knew and applied God in  
 Nature, or the life of the flesh, yet that  
 state remains no longer, but by and  
 thorough judgment is pressed down into  
 death, and hath nothing in God, nei-  
 ther pleasure, nor joy, nor comfort.  
 And although Nature or the flesh had  
 for some time some such thing in God,  
 yet now it hath it no more. Whatso-  
 ever came out of *Ægypt*, and did rejoyce  
 to go forward into the promised Land,  
 that must fall in the Wilderness and dye;  
 but the Children, sprung from them,  
 did come into that Land. Now though  
 the flesh is thus condemned unto death,  
 that it can have no delight nor joy in  
 God, yet the mind is and resteth in peace  
 and joy, and then the man, when the  
 flesh is thus dead, is like to wax which  
 softened by the fire, and is made fit to  
 receive all Impressions. As often as a man  
 is willing, upon the appearance of God,  
 to gain his life in God, and he himself  
 prehends the very thing; he ought the

fore again to be judged, and to suffer a new death. It behooveth the thieves to remain under judgment upon the cross, retaining no life, either in God or in the creatures, nor for the obtaining of life, can they be heard, until the thief on the right hand, forsaking all accidents, shall turn himself unto Christ. It also behooves this man to remain in judgment, according to the flesh, till, as to that, he shall be dead: Nor shall he ever be raised up again into that life, according to which he hath dyed, but he is eternally to forsake it, out of, or from that just judgment. But he shall be raised into another life, which is God himself. And this is then that pure nature, that pure humanity, that pure flesh, which Christ assumed, as it is written *Zach. 2. 12. And the Lord shall possess Judah his portion in the sanctified Earth.* And such purified flesh hath access to God, and God does manifest himself to it with delight, and standeth given up under God and possesseth God without appropriation, seeing he leaves him also free. Such a man possesseth God no more in Nature, that  
is

is in the life of the flesh, but possesseth God in the death of Nature. It possesseth God in God, it knoweth God in God, it seeth God in God. It knoweth Christ no more according to the flesh, as formerly, but according to the Spirit; God, in this man, enjoyeth all things; and does with him according to his pleasure, both in time, and in eternity, and this Man is at rest in God. But the anxiety, which he suffers in the flesh or nature, he indeed perceiveth, that sometimes he knows not which way to turn him: but he so is at rest, that he wills nothing, but what God willeth: if therefore it behooveth a man to possess God in the death, and not in the life of the flesh, it much more behooveth him to possess, use, know, and behold the creature in the same death of the flesh: for if this is to be done inwardly, as to God, much more ought it to be done outwardly, as to the creature: for all things must be beheld and applied in death, and not in life, if it be to be rightly done. Whilst therefore we are not yet dead, but are yet alive, we ought to be lifted up on the cross,

cross, and lay down such a life under a just judgment. For else we cannot be conversant in or with the sight of God, unless when we lye down in death: and our conversation which is without death, is no conversation in the sight of God, and though in the sight of Men it may have a semblance, yet it cannot stand before God. But when life is, as was said, so laid down, we are by the resurrection of Christ raised up again into a new life: for unless the resurrection of Christ should be, we should remain eternally in death. When the thief on the right hand, leaving all, did turn himself unto Christ, he begged to be heard of him in his Kingdom. Therefore he yielded up himself into conformity of the death of Christ, wherefore also he was conformed also in the resurrection. He was crucified by Law, which, like a just Magistrate, did not desist from him, till it had thrown him into death: and then he had finished his office, and so became justified from sin: he also revived not any more into that life, to which he dyed by the Law, otherwise the Law would have had power

power over him again. But Christ vivified him another way, and in his resurrection raised him up again into eternal life, which is God himself. Then the Law had no more power over him: for that life, for which Satan (by means of the Law) accuseth a Man, is judged by, and thorough death, and is taken out of the way.

All that came out of *Ægypt* must dye in the Wilderness, but their Children came into the Promised Land, by these particulars that fruit is denoted, which follows upon a going out. When a man comes into the Land of Promise, and there grows fat and gross, if then he doth not behave himself rightly, he is again expelled into the Land of the North, where much misery, grief, and pain is sustained, till the Lord doth bring him from thence again; then he enters into it again by another way, viz. with a greater glory, and riches then before; and then he shall never be cast out again. For though they which Returned from *Babylon*, did not find that in the temple, which they had before, yet the Glory of the

last temple was greater then that of the first.

## CHAP. XXVIII.

**W**Hen a Man loseth himself, he nevers finds himself the same again as he was when he lost himself: and he knows not the fruit as yet of that losing of himself, when he as yet hath not seen it, or experinced it.

When corruption is present, Fruit doth not presently appear; for that does grow by degrees even to its full ripeness.

He that is free from all persons, hath need that he be free also in his own person, and that not only notionally, but also essentially.

When a man hath lost his body, he never findeth it the same again: but in his Soul he finds a supernatural understanding, Light, and Claritude, and wh ever then he understands of God, is not yet God, but rather the contrary. Therefore he hath found his Soul so must he again lose it, as before he had his body, so, as he shall never fir

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As  
also  
did  
it  
such

such a Soul again. But the calamity of this destruction and death is vast : but out of these a man comes into the true essence, *viz.* God : and then that is much more essential, then it was at first, when he was to lose himself with so great an anguish and Death.

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## CHAP. XXIX.

**W**Hen a man loseth himself as to the body, he afterwards findeth himself as to his Soul, in the supernatual understanding, knowledge, vision, and use : then when he again loseth himself, as to his Soul, he is stripped of all these again : and then ariseth great calamity, Hell, and Misery ; yet if he goeth forth out of them, then he findeth himself in the vision of God, and in such wisdom, understanding and claritude, as the former understanding, vision and use of his Soul, when he first lost his body, could not comprehend. Christ therefore so assumed humanity, that he was united therewith. But after that the inferiour Powers also

to be assumed by him, there is yet need of another death. Then a Man stands in a full purpose of persevering in Christ, and never to go back again from him: just like him, who sitting at a Table spread and filled with various and delicate sorts of Food, desires not to depart from thence: or like him, who living well, and sound, desires not to kill himself.

How much misery, and difficulty of death is required before a man is purified, is known to them, who have experienced the thing: and when a man is purged and prepared for the seed of God, that it may be sown, yet he does not hitherto apprehend nor perceive that seed, and knows not that he is sown therewith, until it cometh up: nor yet doth it come up, until it be corrupted in the Earth. How great miseries and anguishes in dying are required to that corruption of the seed, is also known to them, who have felt it. This death of the Soul happeneth after the death of the Body is past: for a death also belongeth to the Soul, both which deaths must be fulfilled in a man. When the body is lost, the Soul also

must be lost. And this is that same Talent, which the Lord required of the man, besides those Ten; for both sums are due unto him, and he will have both paid unto himself. That which was said before concerning the seed sown in a purified mind, which is not perceived until it be corrupted, and groweth forth, the very same thing doth more clearly appear, from the similitude of the Field sown with Corn.

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## CHAP. XXX.

**I**N a man from whom sin is taken away, and who is purged again from sin, no more motions thereof are found in the bottom of the mind: for from a root cleansed from all sins, how can any evil spring forth? For that would be a sign, that somewhat was still deficient there, and that the bottom was not wholly purified. If *Plato* had had his foundation thoroughly purged, he had not indulged his anger over his servant. What motions soever happen in them that are purified, proceed not from the bottom

of their minds, but from without only, and such do presently drive them out again, whether it be anger, or honour, or ambition, or such like.

To a man once purified, there is yet need of a closer purification, and after that of another yet more close. Death and corruption do ascend as the increase ascendeth. Let no man think, that he who hath a certainty of eternal life hath therefore no need to suffer. It is written, *Heaven is my Throne, and the Earth is my Foot-stool.* When therefore the mind of a man is the Heaven and throne of God, then God useth his flesh as subjected unto himself, and for his foot-stool. There were given to the Woman in the Revelations two Wings, that she should fly away into the Wilderness, from before the face of the Dragon: but the Dragon went forth, and fought with her seed, those are such men as are not yet set fully at liberty.

Illumination is never brought to pass in a man, unless first he be purified; for Illumination must be expected to follow purification, until the very last point of impurity.

mpurity be also perfectly purged out.  
 And then presently succeeds Illuminati-  
 on; and when the business draws to-  
 wards en end, claritude doth always as  
 it were hover over him, nor does he yet  
 enter, until the very last point also be  
 purged out, and then at length he enters.  
 The first purification of a man is by  
 working under the Law: the second by  
 Christ under Grace. Do thou consider,  
 how that which is bound may then be  
 freed, and how a man must be quite  
 wearied out in the combate, under this  
 Illumination. But as it was said here of  
 the first Illumination, *viz.* that it is not  
 made before the first purification be ac-  
 complished, even unto its utmost degree:  
 so it is not in the second purification,  
 wherein the foundation is purged, *viz.* that  
 we might then look for Illumination,  
 when purification was fully accomplish-  
 ed: Now though there be a disparity by  
 reason of Illumination yet there is none  
 such by reason of purification, for even  
 as the first is performed gradually, so also  
 is the second.

There is no means extant, by whose  
 help

help God and our mind can be united, but only the most pure body of Christ.

If we must be regenerated, and become new creatures now in time, then must that be fulfilled in our Souls, which was done in the body of Christ: for it behoved him to suffer, to dye, to be laid in the Sepulchre, and then to rise again: thus ought our Spirits to be also conformed: yea our bodies also, before they can be vivified to live eternally, must first dye in much misery and anguish, and then be raised up again at the last Day.

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## CHAP. XXXI.

**T**He new man doth all things out of, or from regeneration. He hath no need to go first, and hear, or read, what he is to do or to leave undone, because all his things proceed out of Regeneration.

To a regenerate Man, who worketh and exerciseth himself in God, eating, and drinking, and sleeping, and every temporal need begets trouble and anxiety.

He who hath regeneration it self, and is come into the essence of God, restraineth himself within bounds, nor does he act as formerly, when he had the thing only in notion.

There is no need to command a man newly born, that he should live, and see, and eat, and drink, and sleep, and wake, and desire, and go, and stand, and speak, &c. for he does all these things unbidden; by nature, for it is his essence and property: that which he outwardly hears and sees, is only the expression of himself: for he derives none of these from elsewhere, for he had them before, and it is his nature, and he thus acteth freely. Nor is it needful, that it should be told him, what a man is, or what it is to live, to eat, to drink, to sleep, to wake, to desire, to stand, to go, &c. for he knows all these by his own proper experience. But on the contrary, a man that is not yet born, knows not what a man is, or what it is to live, to eat, to drink, to sleep, to watch, to desire, to go, to stand, &c. Neither can it so be propounded to him, that he may understand

stand it, or by any expression have it represented to him. The like, to this, may be said of a man born of God, who knoweth all things by his own proper experience, whatever the Scripture testify and express: for all that, is his nature and propriety, and nothing is adverse to him, which he cannot freely do. And therefore he is no longer under the Law: He knows by his experience, the wayes, by which we are led to regeneration, or what regeneration, or a man new born again, is; as also what is his life, his food, his drink, his exercise, his work, his going, his standing, &c. and of these things there is no need, that any of them should be commanded to him, for he hath all things of himself, and they are his propriety, besides he freely and willingly doth them, nor can he do otherwise. There is no need to tell a Lover, what Love is, nor a Godly man, what Godliness is: and because he is so come unto the very essence of things, that they are become his habit and use, and being always present with him, he cannot then be angry, though he be contradicted,  
and

and the matter is not believed by men, for else he knows and is sensible of the thing, and that he, who is against him, ought to be subjected to his Judgment. He who is fully sound in health cannot be angry, nor grieved, though one should say to him, that he is sick, for he feels that it is otherwise; but he who hath the thing only in notion, but not in substance, cannot bear contradictions, and affronts.

Before we arrive at regeneration, we must be drag'd thorough an unknown, forsaken, and desolate path, and God pulls a man by this way, against his will. For when a man laboured under the Law, so that he could advance no further, and supposed that he was now arrived at the end of his journey, then at length must he journey, and be hurried thorough this unknown way. The first way was pleasant, and full of fresh-green herbs, though it also seemed difficult, and a man thought, that the end thereof would be God: Yet the end proved to be no other then this aforesaid rough-way, which is Purgatory, in which a man is purged from all things which are of the flesh: God indeed draw

a man hither and thither in this way, and still some small piece of flesh is torn off, here, or there, till it be left quite bare, and nothing but Spirit remains. Then the man willingly yields himself up into the hands of God, and into those sufferings, because the carnal affections are thus consumed in this purgatory, so that there is nothing remains but Spirit. Then God cometh, and applyeth himself unto man, and gives himself to be known of man, and so this man comes at length to arrive at true substance or essence, of which he is made capable by this suffering, for in this suffering, or purgatory, he is fully purged, and made fit to receive God. When God is willing to help us, then he exerciseth us with this suffering, when all exercises, and all strength of our own faileth, even then are these the exercises of God, and his strength. When all our strength is vanished away, and we have so long laboured under the Law, that we can do no more, then is God present, whether we will or no; for here a man must go on, nor is it permitted him to go back again: for he is in the hand  
of

of the Lord, into which he often desired to come; and that hand will not then let him go, till it hath rightly broken him in pieces, by afflictions, and hath tumbled him up and down thorough various cases. Whence it comes, that he alwayes more and more, loseth himself, till he be freed from all his flesh, and is made capable of the heavenly influence. Whoever they are who are not thus exercised, but abide in their own labour, can never be advanced higher, but stand at a stay always in the same state; and if one shall return after the space of a year, or two years, yea of ten, unto them he shall find them still, as he formerly left them, how much soever they exercise themselves under the Law, and severity, and good works, and labours, and fastings, and abstinence, &c. Yet they all stop their course here, being still inwardly unchanged, and unregenerated, and of the new creature or regeneration know nothing, because they are not exercised in the hand of the Lord, by means of the aforesaid sufferings: for affliction alone is this way to the new Generation, to

Wisdom

Wisdom, and to true Knowledge. The  
aforesaid labour also must be under the  
Law, yea and go before that other ( else  
we cannot arrive at the said state of suf-  
fering ) so that no one abides therein: for  
the mind is not yet so purified, and there  
still sticketh unto its bottom somewhat  
that is worldly, though one may appear  
otherwise outwardly. Consequently,  
we become not in our minds, partakers  
with Christ, until, being purified by that  
purgatory, and these sufferings, we are  
made capable of him: for light and dark-  
ness, Christ and *Belial* dwell not together.  
Those middle things, which are interpos-  
ed between God and us, and unto which  
we always remain fixedly holding our  
eye, so as we cannot see God; those mid-  
dle things ( I say ) are to be removed, by  
the means of sufferings from God, if  
we are to be united to him. If Gold  
could be sensible, and speak, it would  
certainly say what it should suffer, before  
it could be purified, and so the Earth  
would say, how much it must suffer,  
and how much it would stand in need of,  
before the seed is produced out of its bo-  
wells.

wells. When a man hath brought all  
 his labours to an end, nor cannot go on  
 further, then is the chiefest and highest  
 work yet before his hands, lying as undone.  
 If this must be perfected and done, it  
 must be done by God; for it behooveth that  
 he should accomplish these things, which  
 are impossible for a man to do.

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## CHAP. XXXII.

**A** Man who hath begged help from  
 the Lord, judges other men ho-  
 nester then himself: for he confes-  
 ses that if others had had this grace,  
 which was done to him, that they had  
 been more faithful, and more honest by  
 much, then himself is. Whence also he  
 abstaineth from rash judgment, and com-  
 miserates poor men, because he beholds  
 their future misery, out of which he  
 himself thorough the mercy of God, with-  
 out any merit of his own, is snatched,  
 and therefore he cannot extol himself a-  
 bove others, nor tax them, or delude  
 them, but rather humbleth himself be-  
 neath all, and burneth with a universal  
 charity.

charity. Moreover he would willingly renounce his own Salvation, that others might but be saved. Nor can he do otherwise, because this is the property of regeneration. He who hath regeneration, and is arrived at the true substance, adhereth to no things, whatsoever he does, or omits to do, or eats, or drinks, or goes, or stands, whether he be with others, or whether he be alone; but he alwayes is free from all, and uncestantly beholdeth God, whose he is properly, and for whose sake he useth all things. At what time he is rapt upwards, he is put beyond himself, and is without all discretion: and when he is let down again from that same mountain, he uncestantly looketh back, upwards again. The new man by a continual ascent every houer, and moment goes away unto God, nor doth he ever stop his course, because God is unsearchable, and past finding out. He regards not temporals, though he may seem so, and though he does eat, drink, sleep, and is cloathed; for if he should regard them he would still stand in time: but all the aforementioned

oned things are snatched from him by fire, that he might ascend above time, and stand in God. He dyed and rose again in God: he fell off from all things, and perished both in Body, Soul, and Spirit. At first, every one is an infant, then a youth, and thence he goeth into man-hood, and at length into old age, then we falter, and can no longer enjoy the pleasure of youth: and at last we say, I remember, that I have been a young man, but time is gone: When young men rejoyce, I am in sadnes; and whilst they live, I dye.

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### CHAP. XXXIII.

**T**Here is not a letter in the Holy Scriptures, which ought not to be understood and interpreted concerning the body of Christ: now there are many members of Christ's body, that which is not in one member, is in another. The whole Scriptures, of the Old, and New Testament, with all figures and ceremonies, prefigure the very substance of the matter, and is a type of the internal truth,

as the Image in the glass, is the representation of the face. And as the Image cannot be in the glass, of whom there is no truth or substance: So there is no representation of Scripture, or of ceremonies, or of figures, to which there belongs not some truth and substance. When therefore a representation, or Image is true, there is also a true essence, or substance. There is no shadow without a body, nor figure, or Image without an essence. The Book of *Psalms* begins maturely with man, and continues with him unto old age, and even to his end, and with man it riseth up from bottom to top. No Christian transcendeth the exercises of the *Psalms*: nor can he get so high, but the *Psalms* accompany him still, and express his mind.

How long doth the faithful man wait for God, till he cometh! and when he is come, he departs again and hides himself, that a man cannot find him. And by this very thing God will purge a man, that he may learn truly to possess him without appropriation: for at first, he assumeth God with appropriation, and this

this then is that same subtile flesh of him  
which ought to be consumed.

## CHAP. XXXIIII.

**F**Aith is a most desolate thing. Just as when many things are reached out to any one, and he catcheth at them but then they are pull'd away again but at last a door of escape is opened to him, which then he weighs in the balance, and because he doth not see it to be a true going forth, he forthwith lets it go and waiteth upon the Lord. This faith be- holdeth those things which appear not; and which a man knows not whence they are to be taken: for he hopes where there is no hope. The Thief saw Christ naked, hanging next unto him upon the Cross so that there could appear no Kingdom no Salvation or Life to belong unto him but contrary to all his whole capacity of Understanding he did believe, that which he did not see. By how much the farther off, and by how much the more incredible the things are which are propounded, by so much the greater is the Faith.

Faith. And by this faith cometh Salvation and righteousness above all the understanding, faculty and capacity of man. Christ saith: *I am humble*: These words sometimes do dart like a flash of lightning into a man, and then vanish away again: if they should abide, so many adversities and injuries could not fall upon a man: for he would alwayes think, that these were justly done unto him, and they also were still to be heartily loved, from whom these were done unto him. Yea though these should be a hundred fold more and greater, which do happen to him, either from God or men, yet would he alwayes abide without complaint or murmuring, and would confess all to be rightly, and not injuriously done unto him. When *Paul* said, that he was the lowest of the Apostles, then was he the greatest. Better is an humble sinner confessing his sins, then a just man puffed up, boasting much, and handling others with hard words.

All things may be fulfilled in a man, which are extant in Scripture, but not by a man's, but by God's strength, and when  
thus

thus the meaning of Scripture is fulfilled in a man, the Scripture is a representation of the things which are fulfilled in him: so that when he looks into Scripture, he may have the representation of all things which are in himself.

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## CHAP. XXXV.

**I**N all height of condition, humility is to be kept; and in the Deity, the Humanity is not to be forgotten; nor must any one fall back into himself, but property of person is always to be excluded, and God alone is to be beheld. No man descendeth ( I say ) more humbly, then did Christ, who yet was the most high, for he comprehended both God and man. So also ought we, when exalted up into the Deity, to retain the humanity, nor to forget our slenderness, for our emptiness must always be beheld, and we are to be humbled beneath all others.

We can never come unto poverty of Spirit, unless first we be taken up into God, and after that be let down again from him in the condition of the created Nature.

Nature, that is into our emptiness, or  
 anity: and then Christ for certain re-  
 maineth alwayes with us. No man is  
 as then in the creature, that is, when  
 upon the acknowledgment of our own  
 emptiness, we renounce ambition, that  
 is, the endeavour of appropriating. The  
 Peacock helps us to a similitude for this,  
 for when he beholdeth his tayl, he setteth  
 it upright, but when he looks down upon  
 his feet, he lets his tayl fall: so doth a  
 man set in the vision of God, he desist-  
 eth from all aspiring of mind, when he  
 looks upon his feet that is, the state of his  
 created nature. Littleness is to be learn-  
 ed of Christ, for we ought to be afraid,  
 lest thorough high speculations we be lift-  
 ed up, and so fall like *Lucifer*. Christ  
 saith: *I am humble*: if he was humble,  
 who was so high in the Deity, and one  
 with it, what then ought not an elect  
 man to be? Humility therefore and little-  
 ness should be always the care of an elect  
 man, that he may give to God the things  
 that are God's, and keep to himself, that  
 which is his: For in pride consisteth the  
 highest enmity to God, and the greatest  
 fal

fall from him. If therefore an elect Man be a little too much elevated in sublime matters, let him acknowledge his errour with the deepest grief, and let him confess, that he oweth a thousand talents, when another perhaps, who is still living in nature, scarce oweth one. The delight and study of true Christians is always to desire humble and low things, and there security abideth with them: and Christ dwelleth in them.

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## CHAP. XXXVI.

**W**Hen a man is exercised about the loss of his Soul he knows no way of escaping out eternally, but he is quiet, and chooseth to remain in that same death, and perdition of his Soul without any condition made, nor can he believe any redemption or salvation, and if one talketh to him of these good things, he refuseth to hear them: yea all comfort is a bitter affliction to him, when now he shall be at rest in this eternal damnation and death. Of these *Job* saith: I despaired, nor shall I at all live beyond

beyond this moment, thou hast set me  
 at the very bottom. These happen to a  
 man in the perdition; and corruption of  
 his Soul, his body being already dead.  
 But, concerning those things, which are  
 done after the death of Body and Soul,  
 nothing can be said: for they must be  
 felt: all that are spoken are quite contrary  
 to the thing it self: all this abovesaid, is  
 the way to that end that lasteth eternally.  
 He who is exercised in the aforesaid way,  
 cometh to attain the apprehension of that  
 end, just as he doth, who finds his way  
 out. This end and this way are the acti-  
 ons of God only, but the passion or suf-  
 fering belongs to man. This is that way,  
 into which a man is, against his will,  
 compelled by God; here will prevails  
 not, but coaction, as the Lord saith to  
 Peter: *When thou wert young, thou didst  
 chuse thy self, and thou wentest whither  
 thou wouldest, but when thou shalt be old,  
 thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and thou  
 shalt go, whither thou wouldest not.* He  
 who persevereth not in the said passion,  
 but goes back from Christ, that is, freeth  
 himself, that liberty of his belongeth to  
 time,

time, but not to God, and that man is abortive, of whom *Esdra* saith: *There shall be many abortives.*

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## CHAP. XXXVII.

**T**He Elect stand yielded up, and left to God: and what ever they meet with, they accept it from God alone, and acknowledge it to be God, nor do they respect the creatures: Wherefore also they love their enemies, and are in themselves, free from envy and hatred, and can pray for their enemies, whose friends they are, confessing all to be good that happeneth to them; but for them that injure them, they, on the other side count those things not to be good. True Christians, with all that they have, are not their own, but God's propriety. Whatsoever therefore happeneth to them, happeneth to God, also they take all as from God: Nor do look upon men, nor upon other things, but upon God, to whom they give up themselves, knowing that all things come from him. They who are in this state, to them every cross is tollerable.

tolerable, and not only tolerable, but also pleasant, because it cometh from God. When a man yieldeth himself up to God, and commits himself to his will, all anguish and pain becomes tolerable to him, and every hell, an Heaven. But these things come not to pass at first, when his state beginneth, but they then come at last, when one hath been for some time therein, and exercised therein.

It's necessary, that the will of God should become as pleasant to thee in the desertion of God, as is God himself. The new creatutes, or men translated into God, are so subtile, and tender, that, for meer subtile spirituallity, they can scarce bear the least word, and yet it behooveth them to hear, see, and suffer every violent assault and sharp usage.

A man born again chooseth the good, but refuseth the evil: and steps down into the commotion of an evil, not from his inward foundation, but from without. Yet that commotion is a cold one, and wanting strength, it is presently suppress'd, and the good is chosen for its quiet sake, in which the man standeth, and is yield-

ed up unto God's will, from whose hand he receiveth all things: and those things which are difficult he can bear them, without the motions of envy, anger, or hatred, as springing forth from his foundation: for he turns his eyes from all intermediate things upon God alone, and owns all things for good, yea for God, which happen unto him, nor doth he desire them to be averted from him: for even as God willeth, so he desires to bear the thing, and though it be hard for him, yet he so acquiesceth in the divine will, that he would not have it otherwise, then God would: seeing he well knoweth, that nothing happeneth unto him, but what God hath decreed, willed, and destinated should come upon him.

Those whom God advanceth to perfection are despoiled of all things, in such a manner, as if they should say to those things in their mind: look no more upon us, for your end is come.

Men perfected in age can rightly use a knif, which an infant cannot. Therefore ought not infants to imitate the perfect in all things which they do,  
The

The grown do fear to give a knif, into the hands of infants: also they can keep themselves clean, and unpolluted, and being free from dirt, they can do that, which infants cannot do. The Perfect do with grief and terrour, speak of things perfect and sublime, and could more willingly hold their tongues, yet are they often times forced to break out into words. They had rather speak of more simple things, yea of such they more willingly speak: and when they must speak of sublime things, they are in streights; When a man cometh into God, and God into him, then he acknowledgeth himself to be unworthy that the earth should bear him.

All persons are swallowed up, when a man cometh into God, and they are all found in God. When a man is no longer his own, but standeth under God, he also belongeth to God so, as that he manifestly yieldeth, and giveth place to God: Then God himself performeth all the affairs of a man, and all things open themselves, which before, although many questions were made about them,

yet could they not be comprehended. He that is translated into God, judgeth of all things rightly, and all difference or distinction is manifested to him. He who cometh into God, he sees so many and great riches before his eyes, of which hitherto he had never heard, so that those riches, which he hath now in God, do appear to him, few and small: and therefore his whole life is in ascending continually, nor can he ever come to the end: and therefore, should he desire to live a thousand years, he could not count or reckon all his sufferings, because his whole life consists in a going forwards. Also on the contrary he is so at rest in the divine will, that he is prepared, even that very hour, to dye, if God so pleaseth. And to speak it summarily: The will of God is his will, joy, and life: and therefore he is prepared to suffer whatsoever God shall impose upon him. For he hath yielded up and committed himself unto God. But before this yielding up is performed, how much and how great misery and anguish does come betwixt, then at length one cometh to apprehend

prehend, when he once doth arrive at  
the very thing it self.

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THE  
SAYINGS  
OF  
Mat. Mayer.

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The Second Book.

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CHAP. I.

**C**Hrist said of the Temple Magni-  
ficently built, it must be destroy-  
ed, so as there shall not be left one  
stone upon another. Now he  
himself was this same very Temple, in  
which he had appeared, preached, and  
taught: And also he declared, how one  
G 3 misery

miserie should follow another. But the destruction of the Temple denoteth the dereliction of the Elect: For man plainly is to be destroyed, and if he then knew that this was the will of God, he would yet notwithstanding be comforted, but this also is hid from his eyes.

When a man is reduced into a meer nothing, into dust, and ashes, it is his perfection. That which is proper to man comes under the judgment of God, and is captivated under the power of God. Just as one being led captive in the midst of an army, desires not to fly away, seeing he knows, that that is in vain: Thus also doth this man bow down himself, and seeks not to escape, because he is a captive under the power of God, which power he knows doth extend it self over all, viz. in Heaven, Earth and Hell. But he which knoweth not these things, he seeks to escape, nor will he bow himself down: but the other knoweth otherwise, that he is kept bound under the power of God, which no man can escape from. Then whatsoever is the proper enjoyment of Man, is bowed under

under the judgment of God, in which also it is consumed. *Moses saith: The works of God are perfect, all his ways are judgment. And the Psalter saith: My flesh is very much terrified through fear of thee; and I greatly fear thy judgments.* Behold here the ways of the Lord are said to be a judgment in which all propriety<sup>x</sup> is destroyed. Here fear and terroure invade a man, and the further he sees thereinto, so much the more he is terrified. When the Lord is to be feared, his strokes shall be soundly felt. God indeed forgiveth sin, yet he doth not leave it unpunished, but comes upon it by his judgment.

When a man acknowledges, that he is the most inferior of all, and sets all above himself, and that he is the most foolish, unworthy, and the most vain of all, then is he nearest to his perfection: and such as he beholds himself, such also he is. That a man hath great Illumination, charity, and wisdom, is not his perfection, but God is his perfection, who is the same no less without him, then in him. Now when a man stands in

his nothingness, and is reduced into dust and ashes, this is his perfection, and that which God puts forward. And when a Man is so reduced into his nothingness, then also must this nothingness be reduced into nothing, nor ought a man even to arrogate that to himself: for God by his judgment hath reduced him into Nothing. The new man doth not profit or go forwards, for it is God himself: but a man profiteth or goeth forward in the new man, who neither is deficient nor proficient, in this a man profiteth or goeth forward and increaseth. The fear and terrour of God is introduced into a man with great affliction.

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## CHAP. II.

**T**O speak forth the hidden things of God is rather rashness, then devotion, for they are to be adored, and we ought to tremble before them, but not to babble them out. Some indeed do freely meddle with them even by talking of them, but he that is humble adoreth them with an humble voice. For  
tho.igh

though one does understand some profound meaning, yet it always reveals it self to be more profound. The essence of a thing is too worthy to be expressed in words.

When I pray, that the will of God may be done, I am terrified: and I must add, O Lord, with thy grace. I can desire no joy, no comfort, no nor heaven, no more then doth that wall, for I may not: it is grace and mercy which I desire, communion is a most terrible thing to the flesh, because the flesh desires propriety, and full possession to it self, therefore is communion death unto it. Faith is like unto a ship driven from the shore, which hath neither rudder, mast, nor oares.

He that is without appropriation, cannot be angry at whatsoever he is either to suffer, or do: for to be angry belongs perhaps to others, rather then to him, and therefore he is to decline it. Nothing is to be done boastingly. For to do or to omit any thing boastingly, is a great evil. Whatsoever claims pleasure, that must dye: if he who is well and at ease,  
do

do then lose his time: then is time made his proper own.

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### CHAP. III.

**T**O abstain and repress ones self, is no death in respect of my death: because that is done out of purpose, but this without and beyond all purposes: yet not so, as if the will of God were not pleasing to me. God hath led me violently. To be thus lead is the work of God, nor is it done unless God wills. In the agony of death many things are often done, which are not done in the life's time. In the agony of death is exercised a hard judgment, and then is a man sometimes promoted therein, to which he could never come before in all the time of his whole life. First he must conflict with joy, then with sorrow, and lastly with death. Whatsoever words are spoken without experience, I have no esteem of them. If I had known that this misery, in which I now live was to come upon me, I had perished: but now that I am in it, God holdeth me in it. God holdeth me

me privately, I knowing it not.

The Creature which is rightly used, is made more noble and cometh to God: thus every creature must return to its original, that is, to God, and this is done by that man, who abideth in a right way. The true use of the creatures is performed with giving of thanks: therefore except one rightly useth the creature, he useth it to judgment.

Concupiscence is a thing so secretly hidden in Man, that a Man knows not whither it be concupiscence or not, till for its sake he be lead away captive. By how much any one is nearer to God, by so much the more pitiful is his internal condition. To know God, is a state the most subjected to affliction of all: By how much any one is nearer to God, by so much the higher is he in sufferings. To know God is indeed a bitter state, by reason of the departure of the creature, which for his sake must be left. By how much the greater affliction any one is exercised in, so much the greater grace he hath, and is dearer unto God. If any one could lay open my inside; he would see:

See there nothing but death. I have no prop, nor comfort, nor rest neither in Heaven, nor in Earth, except the will of God, in which I lye down. God begins some new thing with me. I never was at this rate in sufferings as I now am. I have nothing but the will of God, in which I acquiesce. And though I am pressed with so hard afflictions, yet am I far beneath the passion of Christ, the son of God, whose hard and vehement passion, cannot be compared with, by any other. God upholdeth me above my own strength : for it were impossible else for me to do or suffer that which I do. We aim at great things, but the cup we must first drink, before those great things can come, is a bitter cup.

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### CHAP. IIIE.

**I**T is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God who sheweth mercy : This a man must experience with *Paul* in the highest streight and temptation, before these words can be spoken by him : This is proposed to a man; that  
that

that very thing which thou lovest, thou must forsake. What it is to be naked and forlorn, no man knoweth but he who feels it, and he who either was or is in such a state. I fall down before God like a most miserable worm, being unworthy to lift my eyes up unto him. O the cup that is to be drunk! O the draught that consumeth all things! he will not put out the smoking flax, therefore it shall consume with fire. Here I lie like a dumb thing, or like to a post, and I only suffer misery and affliction. I lye under the will of God, and corrupt. If it be said: This is not in vain, for fruit will follow, &c. I leave that to God, and only suffer his will. In God there is no suffering, if I could stand wholly in God there would be no need, that I should suffer. God keeps me in the snares of death, and causeth me in time to go into the nothingness of my self. Though one may get up many degrees, yet we are always to descend, descend, descend, until we come into dust and ashes. That which before now we talked concerning this Nothingness it was with a certain kind

kind of pleasure, yet even all that must be subjected under its judgment: We cannot arrive at this nothingness, but by the exercise of God.

To be delighted with a righteous man, or his writings, words, or works, and to have a kindness and a good will for them, it is the gift of God.

When any one is freed from the creatures that he can have an indifference for them, without grief or joy, whether it be loss or gain, there, is made a breaking thorough, and it is a certain sort of a singular death, that belongs to this case, nor is it the work of man, but of God. Many suppose themselves to be that, which temptation or trial discovers to them that they are not. We must eat as necessity requireth: but we must eat, drink, and sleep with fear: all propriety must expect its judgment, God suffers no appropriation. That which is commonly said, we can do nothing without God, is easily said, but what that is in the very thing itself, or what it is to be conversant in that very thing, no man knows, but he who is come thereunto. Where God teacheth

teacheth and governeth, there is no place for reason, but it is set aside. The teaching, leading, and rule of God doth far surpass it, and the matter seems, to it, to be impossible. Divinity is learnt with joy, but experienced with sorrow. They which study divinity, are for the most part enemies to those who experience it. If grief invadeth us, it is not to be oppressed, lest its fruits perish, but we are to abide in it, and yet not to despair.

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## CHAP. V.

**T**O have a nature wholly self-denied, both as to God and to the creatures, is a deadly thing. Unless Nature should be equally denied, as to God, as also to the creatures, it would not go into death. When the root is extirpated, death is present: When that is accomplished, the renunciation is eternal. When God hath once renounced nature, then is the end come; for it can never return back again to its former state, but it remains in self-denial even as to God also, for flesh and blood possess not the Kingdom

dom

dom of God : But the young sprig grown out of death, that shall be the heir. When any one still stands in labouring under the Law, in continency; then, to morrow may that be committed, which is to day omitted: Because the root and foundation of sin, hath not yet been condemned, even to the very death. He that abides in a choice of things, is always in affliction. He who alwayes seeks after better things and is not contented with the present, must necessarily be alwayes very thoughtful and restless. He is one who saith: When I thus stood in the appetite of things, my appetite did enlarge it self so vastly, and towards so many varieties of things, that I could never be at quiet, till I had wholly renounced all desire, and denying my own self, I came to be contented with a few small things: and when I saw I could be sustained by the meaner sort of things, I did not choole the better, nor was I afflictedly solicitous about other things: Then at length, when I had found rest, I was contented, which way soever things fell.

That which agreeth with Nature is chiefly

chiefly to be omitted, and that which is most disagreeing thereunto, that is, to be done : with how great a difficulty these things are done, may be perceived. God in the wilderness overthrew, and wore out those *Israelites* that still savoured *Ægypt*, and brought up a new generation, which knew not *Ægypt*. Debility consists in the lowermost faculties, not in life, but in death, when the mind is taken up to God. If the *Gentiles* did constitute any thing, they did it firmly, together with security, and knowledge, knowing the matter to be thus and no otherwise. But the *Christians* do not so : but they stand in faith, founded on no security or firmness, being also ignorant of all things, but are in the obedience of faith, whence *Paul* saith : *After the resurrection of Christ, was established the obedience of faith.* The new creature hath nothing for it self, neither knowledge, nor security, nor firmness, as have the *Gentiles*, but walks in faith. The faithful are led into faith beyond security, knowledge, and science ; for all things are taken away from before their eyes, and from out of their hands,

hands, and they stand in the sight of God and in the hand of God.

Our birth is accompanied with appropriation, yet must appropriation be separated from Nature, if the Law of God must be set up in us, which cannot be done but by the death and destruction of the natural man: for it is impossible for Nature to do the will of God and to fulfil the Law, and if that must be done, then must it dye, and perish against its will ( for no death is voluntary, nor active but passive and happens against the will. When therefore God himself accomplishes his own will, ( man's will being dead ) and fulfils the requirings of the Law then he draws glory from men.

The natural man can no more tear his propriety, then a tree planted and rooted, can desist from growing, or bearing its fruits: No more also can the natural man fulfil the Law of God, do his own will, or perform the will of God. If therefore, to keep a tree from growing and bearing fruit, it must be cut down, and quite rooted up: So thus must the natural man dye, and God must be in his stead.

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Christ saith: *He that eateth my flesh,* &c. the flesh of Christ is meat, not that which we consume, but that which consumeth us.

Of *Abraham* it is written, that the earth was to be possessed by his seed, and not by himself: therefore he must go out of it, if room was to be made, for his seed. In this going out a man goes into strange countries, and he knoweth not the way, nor can he ask thereof: Yet he alwayes seeth one step before him. In this dying there is great affliction, but that it may not seem such, and that a man may carry himself also couragiously, acquiescence only can effect that for him.

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## CHAP. VI.

**W**Hen a man hath any thing in his proper possession rightly, he thinks it is due unto him, and judgeth it unjust, if it be taken from him, till he is convinced. But then at length he acknowledgeth, that he cannot stand before the severe judgment of God, and pronounceth God to be just in threatning to him in judgment,

judgment, death and destruction. Then he knows, that he is not worthy to live, and cleerly seeth, that none of them are due to him, which he had appropriated to himself, either as to God, or as to the creature, and therefore he can desire no more, but suffereth his death with the deepest misery and coaction. He is convinced concerning his appropriation, according to which he possessed all, and endeavoured to possess all unjustly, just as when one is convinced by sealed deeds and writings, that this or the other inheritance is not due to him, though he long kept them in his possession for his own, but now is deservedly commanded to give them up. The natural man is never made perfect, but is only translated. Perfection is the man, Christ Jesus: and as much as is received from him, that in him is perfect, holy, new, and just: yet it is not so in self, for he must renounce self, whose natural part is evil and sinful, and must be made his, from whom it may become just, good, and holy: and that is brought to pass in Christ, who is all these, nor is there any other name given, in which

which these things can happen unto us.

If any song, writing, or words are accepted of a Christian, and are grateful to his heart, it is necessary that it should be expressed from out of the cross, and from anguish. If it springs from joy, or from speculation, it is vain, and wanteth spirit or life. Experience teacheth all things, and that which is void of experience is in vain.

We pass thorough time into eternity, and time is mutable: so also is Man produced with mutability, till he comes thither, where there is no corruption, nor mutation.

No man is to be rejected, with how gross or how low a zeal his spirit boyleth with, because they may be changed, and therefore we are to be quiet with a man that standeth in his own zeal. We are first in time before we come into eternity. We first begin with low things, and by degrees are we transferred unto highertill we comethere, where perfection is.

Paul saith: Not as if I had apprehended, &c, by how much the more sublime  
are

are the Saints, by so much the more sublime is their desire: by how much the higher is the perfection, by so much the more sublime are the defects.

A man made conformable by letters, rules, ceremonies, or as to outward appearance, is like a body which hath indeed a nose, a mouth, &c. but yet it wanteth life.

Every thing by its contrary, is made of greater esteem, accounted for holy, and is not rightly known, its contrary not being known, then it is not so. For if cold were not, heat would not be cared for. Heaven is more clearly understood by hell, and the grace of God, by his wrath or anger.

He that rightly knows the fall of *Adam*, and understands his restauration cannot rejoyce, because a man must perish for its sake, and as to all these things he must be annihilated, as to what he is made for. Gladness is assigned over to posterity, and to that fruit which shall grow out of corruption, where a man becometh to be that, which he attaineth to out of corruption. And then he appeareth  
in

in the glory of God, and acknowledges  
 God from God, and loves God from  
 God, and is sanctified, and justified, and  
 renewed in God. And he is made that  
 by grace, which God is by nature.  
 Before death all things were vain, and  
 inconstant, and meer phantasies: but now  
 are become essence, or substance, which  
 abideth. The truth is incorruptible: the  
 truth hath made all things free, and hath  
 united a man to himself: and all things  
 are therefore done, that we might get up  
 thither. All things are disposed to a cer-  
 tain end: Autumn, Winter, Snow, &c.  
 for the fruits of Summer: to this end and  
 scope therefore are all things to be dire-  
 cted, and for its sake are all things to be  
 exercised, and applied, and not for its  
 own sake. The flower is the cause of the  
 fruit, and not of its self: the flower pe-  
 rishes, but the fruit remains: whatsoever  
 goeth before, hath respect hitherto but  
 abideth not, but the fruit remaineth:  
 and this is the truth, in which a man is  
 confirmed, and founded, that he might be  
 eternally by a true union.

The small treatise of the Imitation  
 of

of Christ is very useful to them that are labouring and striving, for it giveth us the best instruction unto life, and I am much delighted therewith, but the *German Divinity* excelleth, in which is the representation of God. The book of the imitation is more profitable for the publick, but the other small treatise of the *German Divinity* is for private use.

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## CHAP. VII.

**B**Ecause God exerciseth his judgment so severely in his Children, and yet his judgment is just, it must be well considered, what becometh us: and that, though we suffer in a wonderful manner, yet is it done unto us with grace and mercy, and that indeed the thousandth part of afflictions, according to our sins, is not inflicted upon us. But God spareth us, and unless it were so, where should we abide? Whence we ought not to be proud, but fearful rather, yea frightened, and to hold our peace. By how much the more a man recedeth from himself, so much the nearer he approaches unto God, and by

by so much the more heavily is he punished also, in respect of nature, which is therefore subjected unto death. If a man should at first know this misery and calamity, he would dye for very grief: but now he cannot be sensible of it, till he falls into it, and then also doth God notwithstanding lead him thorough it. He falls into the Gulph *Scylla*, who indeavours to avoid the rock *Charybdis*. For when a man desires to be freed from the legal accusation of his conscience, he comes and is condemned into death, so that endeavouring to avoid the difficulty on that part; on the other he falls into it, that is, into a state, where the natural man is condemned. When the Law doth no longer accuse, a man is condemned, like a malefactor, who is first accused, and at length is punished: then the accusation ceasing, he suffers death; by the means of which alone, he is freed from the accusation of the Law. He that trieth this, shall find it no liar, which hath promised to him no sweetness. If it be said: but yet it is well, that the conscience is free; though nature may suffer: it is

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answered:

answered: How good the state of the man is, God knoweth: the truth is, it is a miserable condition, but it is accepted of God, and he that is in it, is made nearer to God: But by how much the nearer he is to God, by so much the heavier is his suffering, as to Nature. Here the restraining or bridling in of Nature sufficeth not, we must go beyond that, *viz.* we must dye, and we must perish.

That a man can acknowledge his sin is a great gift, but then the affliction also is great. He that acknowledgeth his sin, God delivers him from them. The vulgar acknowledgment of sins, is not. He that rightly acknowledgeth himself to err, desires to walk in a right way, and to decline from that which is erroneous: but he to whom the erroneous way is not unpleasant, he abideth in it, and defendeth it, nor acknowledges that he erred, though with his mouth he may profess otherwise. In death, that glory is given to God, which could not be done in life, for in life, a man retains the glory to himself, but in death he layeth down the glory.

Nature hath a way so proper to it self, that it will acknowledge or accept no sort of death, till it be willing or nilling cast thereinto: and then the will, reason, memory, and understanding of a man are so bound, and tied down, that the man thinks, that he alone is smitten, and that no man suffers but himself, and from thence forward he can neither take joy in any thing, nor can he draw comfort from the evils of other men. And that usual saying, that common mischiefs do bring comfort with them, yet is not true in him.

He that is yielded up to the will of God, is without choice: yea his very words, which inferr election, do terrify him: for where the virtue of divine will is felt, there such words do excite consternation. Therefore it is not for him to say: I hope it will be so, or so, or so it shall be; or so it shall not be, and the like: but he saith thus: I hope the Lord will do it. Christ saith: *I am the truth.* We think that Christ is with us, and that he is such a one as we are by Nature, but thus he is contrary to us, and is our death.

## CHAP. VIII.

**A**ll ceremonies conform themselves according to God, and are a representation of the hidden truth, but they do not conform themselves unto our weakness as some say; yea and that God gave them, because of our weakness, whenas otherwise they had not been necessary; to which opinion we must assent. Yea furthermore they say, that the very incarnation of Christ is to be thus adorned, which opinion be it far from us! He that is upon a right foundation, and hath an understanding heart, will be wholly opposite to these opinions. For such a one feels and knows, that, without the incarnation of Christ, no salvation can be found on the earth, and that ceremonies, together with all creatures, are only a representation of the heavenly truth, and that they are all conformed according to God, but not according to us, and so also they ought to be. And therefore they judge too dryly concerning them, who say they are toys and trifles

trifles: as also they do attribute too much to them, who are glued fast unto them, and from them, do make God to themselves, and set them in the place of the true substance. They err on both hands, Wherefore we are to wait for a right judgment in all things from the Lord, and to fear least any thing is rashly added from our opinion, for opinion deceiveth us.

Where the powers of sin are felt, and are conquered and broken, a man is cast into great affliction. But when a man puts that affliction from him, and puts it upon Christ, as if he had satisfied for it, and that that satisfaction ought to be imputed to a man, and to be fulfilled in him, so as that sin is to be taken away, and righteousness to be fulfilled: there a man hath not a true sense of sin, but neglecteth it with a light mind: this opinion also is contrary to the writings of the Prophets, and the doctrine of the Apostles, who testify, that Christ must snatch a man out of sin, and let up righteousness, and break the Serpents Head, and overcome all things, and that this victory

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ought to be done in a man, and not to remain without him ( *Rom. 8. 4.* ) for they ought to be a people, in whom all things are done and fulfilled, which the Prophets and the Apostles and all ceremonies testify. Let no man therefore deceive himself, by imposing upon Christ any thing, without himself. Where God doth possess a man, there God reigneth and keepeth him, but man is not at all touched with any care, for what belongeth to God. But a man is not to eye any thing, but his littleness, and emptyness, that is, his selfishness, this is due unto him, and upon that account he boweth under all, and judgeth himself to be worser, more foolish, and more unworthy then all men. All the rest, that is any thing, is God, and is due to God, nor doth it concern man. But if any one, departing from his nothingness, will arrogate to himself, the things which belong unto God, that will prove the highest pride, and the most heavy fall.

## CHAP. IX.

**W**Hen any one is given up to the will of God, there is nothing so heavy, nor so painful, which he cannot bear in the will of God, without election: But as God willeth, so is a thing commended to him, who will do all things. And where that is, there is peace and no where else.

A certain person said, such as the judgment is, so I suffer: under a heavy judgment, heavily, under a light judgment, lightly. When one also is ashamed before his neighbour, because of that, for whose sake he was ashamed before God, conscience is more at quiet: but when one for a secret hidden baseness blusheth not before man, conscience is burdened: and therefore here we must be bound, and no man ought to be ashamed, when he is obliged to confess himself guilty before his neighbour.

God keepeth his promises, but we understand them perversly, until their own time comes when we see what they are,

and to whom they belong. He whose will is resigned, he wanteth appropriation, and its the same to him, whether the thing be, or be not. He who hath a will yielded up to God, he esteems it for heavenly whatsoevr happeneth to him. For all that, is God to him, and God is Heavenly.

Whatsoever falleth out to him, be it advantage, disadvantage, peace, disquiet, riches, poverty, bitter, sweet, heat, cold, hunger, thirst, honor, dishonor, yet are all these, God to him, and consequently Heaven: he is also without appropriation, and nothing else pleaseth him, as if it were Heaven, unless that God wills it. But before any one comes thither, many things are required, especially Time. He who wants this resigned will, esteemeth all that are against his own will, for torments and Hell: yea even those things which of themselves are pleasant. Our proper will therefore is to be discarded, and to this purpose serve our exercises. O how bitter is death to him, who is yielded up to life. All things perish but God, and what is united to him.

The

The voice of the Spirit is such a terror to the flesh, that when any thing is spoken to it of the spirit, it is frightened, and trembles, because the Spirit is its destruction.

They who aim at a mark, shut one eye, and always level at the mark, and when one hitteth the mark, then he turns himself, and looks upon all the rest, which none of the rest do, because they have not yet struck it, but do still level their aim.

By the cross, God casteth on man, chains and a bridle. And except this should, be so, he would wander into error, in time, and though a man sometimes may think that he shall serve God better, unless this or that happens, yet God adjudgeth it otherwise, and knows this to be best, contrary to a man's own opinion.

## CHAP. X.

**A** Man always requires time, and space, and thinks that he shall satisfy the Law, and yet it cannot be done  
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and he must dye, and God must fulfil the Law in his stead. That which a man thinks he shall do in his life, that is at last performed in his death. When the passion and death of Christ are really in a man, also his resurrection is really in him: if one is real, such also is the other, if the one be only notional, so also is the other; for there are divers resurrections.

A man given up to God, belongs to God, and he hath no propriety, but is a stranger to himself: whatever therefore God, or the creatures shall do unto him, he ought not to intangle himself with them, because they are all of God, whose he is.

When one runneth so long, that for want of breath he lies down, then he dissipeth whatever is his own, and so at length room is made for faith: To stand therefore in faith, is a most miserable thing: for then is man's estate quite consumed, so that he lives upon the favour of another, from whom he expecteth that, which he wanteth. *Paul saith: If ye live according to the flesh ye shall dye: They who are in death,*

death, if they would draw life from elsewhere, yet have they no time for to be accused, because judgment is forthwith ready at hand, and the sword slayeth them. But others, who are yet accused, are not yet in death. A Malefactor, who hath already suffered punishment, and is dead, is no longer accused; for justice hath pass'd upon him, and now, because of that, he is justified, from whence was his accusation. God freeth a man, but not so as to take him from the cross, but to leave him there. God reconcileth a man's enemies to him, so as that he patiently endured them, as sent unto him from the hand of God. Before acquiescence, a man is unbridled, but in acquiescence he beholdeth the will of God, and there finds rest.

Nothing is so strong and powerful in a man, that God is not above it, and which he cannot overcome, and drive out, and so set the man at liberty. For nothing is prevalent against the Lord, before whom all things must fall, and be as nothing, that the victory may be to God, and all things be confounded before him.

Before

Before justification by death, sin hath the dominion in man: but not after justification, because then it is crucified in him.

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## CHAP. XI.

**W**Here the new creature is, God assumeth the Spirit of man, who then becometh a stranger to himself, nor stands no longer in his own place, inasmuch as God taketh it up, who is over him, and keepeth him. This man is saved out of grace, and he stands with fear and trembling before God, on his part wanting all prop, as having God only for his upholder: and then he is held up as it were by a hair only, trembling with uncertainty as on his part: nor hath he any thing in which he can glory besides his infirmity, which he always beholdeth: all things else are looked from him and stand on God's part, and do arrive at him, only thorough grace, and yet he must not look upon them, for he ought to behold nothing, but his infirmities. Far be it from such a one, to say,

say, he cannot fall, for he that saysthat, is either fallen already, or very nigh unto falling.

He who meditates what way things will go with him, he understands not the thing it self, as that which is pleasant, but thinks it to be against him and is frightened with death. When a man comes under grace, then also he comes under the cross, for then the natural man is in a continual death. When a man understandeth, what he is to lay aside, he speaks not of corruption rashly, and with joy. There is such a thing as a resurrection, but it is not so gross a thing as is believed.

God indeed pardoneth infants if they speak foolish words, but he doth not so to others: for far be it from them to speak like infants. Now such are infants, who have not yet been exercised by God.

A cut finger is cured again: but a heart wounded is never cured: That which is in the state of abstinence, can return into the first state of life: but that which is dead, riseth not again in that state, in which it is dead.

## CHAP. XII

**T**He torments of the Martyrs are the glory of the death and resurrection of Christ, for these have demonstrated that a man is to be led in a certain way above Nature thorough the death and resurrection of Christ, which way is impossible to Nature. We must then die to all humane strength, that the virtue of Christ may operate all these things. Whence it is that they are called the lights of mankind, because they are led above all the strength, understanding, and will of men. And all these things can the virtue of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ perform, if it be not without a man, but really cometh into him. Where there is a real death and corruption, there also succeedeth a real life and salvation: but where that is not really done, but notionally only, and remains without a man, there also life and salvation is not real but notional only, and without a man. The Martyrs in their torments gave glory unto God. Glo-

ry is not given to God before that a man arriveth at, or cometh unto his death, and is estranged from himself, and God doth take up his room or place, who keepeth, governeth, leadeth, and exerciseth him above all reason; which reason here, neither sees nor knows any door of escape, but is held captive under the obedience of faith: because a thick cloud and a dark mist hath covered the eyes thereof, that it cannot see the way, whereby God is wont to lead a man. This is here that passive state, when a man dyeth, and suffers God. But in the active state, under the Law, when life still is present, it was not so, for then a man was governed by reason, to whom was added Will and Knowledge about the actions, and omissions of a man: though all things are directed by divine help, and in divine claritude, which struck reason down, so that a man could govern himself, conduct, and conserve himself, day and night, yet when all these are taken away, he must at length come into death, that God may come and take his place, and administer all things himself. Then a man is drawn another

ther way, then what he walked before, and it is that which excels his own will, knowledge, and strength. This man is become passive and God operateth in him. As the conscience and the mind was captivated, and saddened, when it was well with the flesh, so when the flesh came into death, the mind and conscience was exhilarated, and set at liberty.

Many and great gifts of the Holy Spirit do come really into a man, which yet are not Regeneration; But they go and come. Whereas that is Regeneration, when & where God hath planted his habitation, and God is become one with man. In God, neither the world, nor pleasure, nor joy is suffered, Nature must want all these when the mind standeth in God.

They who stand under grace, their outward man is always conserved or kept by a deadly judgment, their internal man by vital nourishment: thus they are always kept by God.

Into the mind, which standeth in God, no motion to joy or grief can penetrate: But there comes a great sorrow, which descends

descends into the flesh, that the mind may remain free.

What is patience, is it or not, when a man suffers and complains to no man? no, no, for this is only continence, but not real patience. But this is patience, when a man can imprecate no evil upon another, by reason of any adversity: but if any one hath injured him, he prayeth heartily for him; note, he hath a kindness for him, and loveth him: and if one hath taken any thing from him, he yieldeth up, and giveth all these things to him as unto his own self, and is (upon it) of a chearful, and not of a sad mind. And this is the fruits of the spirit: but continence is the work of the Law, and cannot justify a man in the sight of God, and is precedent unto righteousness, which follows afterwards through faith, in which all things are real, which were before notional: for in old things did abide the shadow, but the real things are of Christ himself: *Paul saith: The Law could make nothing perfect*, but was the bringing in of a better hope. There was no rest to the Fathers till Christ did come, as the Prophe<sup>t</sup>

Prophet saith concerning Sion, *Isaiab 62.*  
 1. That if one would be made one with the truth, it cannot be done, whilst non-corruption lasteth: and whatsoever is said or understood, of it whilst it lasteth is without experience. Non-corruption hopeth in vain, for it cometh or arriveth not unto God. For no man receiveth God without death and destruction. Every natural man is in the desire of God, or the creature, and yet neither is due unto him: for if he could come at God, as he does to the creatures, he would alike abuse him, as he abuseth them, viz. with appropriation. These may be thus observed; every imagination, which is in man concerning God or the truth, before purgation or death, nature is ready to appropriate it to herself, and to rest contented therein with delight: that she may upon that account receive honour, and respect, and, notwithstanding, this conversation is still but according to the flesh, which is followed by death. For this rising up cannot abide, this bridegroom must be taken away, before the real truth can appear. The Apostles possessed

sed Christ before his death imaginarily, but after death really. Whence *Paul* writeth: That he knew Christ no longer after the flesh, but after the spirit and the truth; and that he walked according to that spirit, and not according to the flesh, and that they were now become invisible to every natural man, whence they can be judged by none, but are able to judge all: that they were now sanctified or made holy, by the Holy Spirit, after that Christ was risen again from the death; before whose death and resurrection no man could be holy.

The Holy Spirit maketh holy, as the Lord saith: *Unless I go away, the Holy Spirit the Advocate, will <sup>not</sup> come unto you. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles, &c.* To renounce all creatures, that nothing may remain but God, and to set God only for the end and aim, Nature and Flesh do hear it with terrour, for they are amazed at this, when they hear, that all things must be taken away from them. So that if the flesh can but retain one only thing, though the vilest, yet would it put or place its whole life therein, and would

would adhere thereunto: But in truth it cannot be so well done for it, for all things will renounce it which way soever it tendeth. Whence at length it must without any support let it self down into death and plainly dye to all things.

When a King and a Beggar are starved to death the death of either, is the same and alike, but yet with a distinction.

He that is in corruption, beholding other good men still standing in non-corruption, thinketh thus: Alas! in what condition are you! O how much still can you be satiated and exhilarated with God, when I can neither be so, nor desire it.

To be at rest no where, but in God, it's requisite, before all things, that one should become poor. The sufferings of *Job* are not hid from me, but that which followed after it, cannot make me glad. The Lord saith: *What will it profit a man to gain the whole World, and to lose his own Soul?* and what advantage would it be to a man to know all things, and yet he experienceth them not, nor are they fulfilled in him! and therefore we ought

ought not to take care of that, to know or understand much, but that we may sensibly apprehend and experience much. *Knowledge puffeth up, but Charity edifieth*, saith the Apostle: Experience supplieth all things in man, and is adequate to knowledge: And thus also the man is made humble.

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### CHAP. XIII.

**W**HEN death is known, it is also feared: And by how much the more profoundly death is known, by so much the more doth it terrify, and is it feared. If Death must be true, it must be true as to all things. When Nature is once dead, as to corporal things, it ought to remain dead, and, as to them, never to revive again: But then life ascends in the Soul, and there seeks nourishment: But Death follows it thither also; and cuts off the thred of that life also, that it may there also remain ~~always~~ dead, nor can it ever revive again. So that at last, the life ascendeth above all creatures, yea above the Angels also; by how many degrees

degrees it is to ascend into life, by so many deaths it is to dye, and always to abide in death. If one abstaineth from any thing, he may take it up again: but according to what any one is dead unto, that, ought always to remain dead, so as that it can never be re-assumed. I never possess piety, and whatsoever I receive from God by my piety, I am plainly robbed thereof, and I can boast no where, neither before God, nor before any man, nor before my own self: for I live by free-grace alone: This state is so miserable, that no man knoweth it, but he that is touched therewith. And though I must live by free-grace yet I know of no grace, nor can I comprehend, or understand, nor know, nor find where that grace should be, nor whence it should come, although I have often felt it. Therefore ought this grace to be both given and taken above and beyond the understanding, knowledge, and comprehension of all men, yea above all merit or godliness, that is in a man, as also above all intellect, and illumination: but as for the justice of God, judgment, hell, and damnation, these

these I can most exactly know and understand, whence they can come, for they alwayes do handle me very severely. But the will of God is my chiefest Salvation: As long as the will of God overshadows me, I can bear all, though I should be roasted, or boyled, annihilated, or slain in Body, Soul, and Spirit. But when the will of God hideth it self for some time, that I do not feel it over me, I fall into such streights, as an unexperienced person cannot believe. My whole hope is, that the Lord will lead us all thorough all, though the case be full of sorrows, for his arm is all powerful.

When a man stands between Conscience and Flesh and when conscience ceaseth, then the flesh urgeth him, and to him it is said, Amend thy life, or thou must dye; but when one stands between life and conscience and transgresseth as to his life, presently it is said to him from God: Thou must die.

## CHAP. XIV.

**T**He Will of God is the death of the Flesh. Faith, when it is upon trial, God then proving it, it experienceth the greatest misery. There are many waies of coming unto regeneration, but the end of all is one and the same, yet one ascendeth in some much higher then another doth: as when any one cometh into the Sun-shine, he hath the Sun, yet is one nearer to the Sun than another.

This is my counsel, that a time be set to attain unto God. The inward mind is free, but the outward humanity without grace, is exercised under a severe judgment. I have no prop under me, whether I respect God or the creatures, or heaven, or the Earth: and I have nothing, but that I can lay my self down in the Divine Will, being wholly set down under God. The Kingdom of Heaven is present, but I cannot enjoy it: the Sun indeed hath shined, but now the falling thereof is come, and it shineth no longer. I lie down in darkness, and in the shadow

dow of Death, nor is there any comfort left to me but in the will of God: for I will nothing, but only what he willeth. Into which state if any one really cometh, he is of all men the most miserable. I say this, that I may express that misery in which I lie. To understand these things is pleasant but really to feel them, most bitter.

When the Spirit suffers, the flesh ought to suffer with it: But when the flesh suffers there is no need, for the Spirit to suffer. It is never better with me than when I give up my self into death.

The flesh suffereth its own judgment, when the Spirit is in peace, but when the Spirit suffers, the flesh must suffer also. The poor animals must dye, for my sake, though against my will: But because I also give my self up to death, I do not refuse the death also of the animals; he that giveth not himself up into death, cannot take his food with thanksgiving.

He that is to exercise modesty, he ought to be exercised by various afflictions, otherwise he will wander, if he shall use it without the experience of the cross. If I

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should stand betwixt two things, nor knew which of the two I am to do, I would weigh them, and would take that which is contrary to my flesh. When I do so, it is well with me, and I call God to witness, saying: Thou knowest, O Lord, what I have done. But when I do otherwise, viz. that which is grateful unto Nature, it is always ill with me, and I cannot call God to witness. Conscience indeed is free, but I dare not alledge that, for it is of grace.

The suffering is hard, when no hope is left in the future for the natural man: for though the day-break is come, yet there is no redemption, nor comfort, but a man must wait without hope, and be quiet in death. And though all the joy, comfort and refreshment of the whole world were present, yet he is bound as it were with cords, and can taste of none of them. And therefore he never desires that time may run out, that a day, a week, a month, a year may come, for whatever cometh to pass in them, is to him as it were a non-entity, because he can rest no where, nor use any thing for his

his delight, for he is made bare or naked of all, and is put up on the cross. Hence is it that both things present, and to come are indifferent to him, when even then he shall be the same as he is now. But those to whom the body of sin is not yet crucified, they are touched with the desire of time. For they are free, and can take up such things as they meet with: But this state cannot last long, for judgment will come: then whatever shall be with him for the future, he cannot take it up, and that which is contrary to him he cannot reject: for he is impotent, whilst he hangeth on the cross, nor can he execute his own will.

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## CHAP. XV.

**A**ll things are or consist in order & order must be kept. If one is willing to knit together superiour things, that he may loosen inferior things, he would break order, and wander in error, of which we must beware. The Lord saith: *He that breaks the least Commandment and shall so teach, &c.* We must seek a free condi-

on in God, in which one is free from himself, for to be free from ones self, is a liberty, which is to be attributed to God.

The grossest and the lowest things are images of things superiour, which is to be understood as well of things spiritual, as things corporeal, for we ascend from the one into the other, and from the inferiour to the superiour, even as pleasures, and the abuse of good things and the building on the sands are images. When things are most gross and low, then are they the image of things superiour, and that which is visible denoteth that that is invisible. The Spirit also hath its flesh in which it dwells. Also mysteries have their external Histories. They who urge mysteries so, as to exclude historys, disturb order and do err. Although Christ the blessed fulfils all things, in spirit, in his elect, which he performed coporally in the dayes of his flesh, yet were they also corporally done in him, therefore the historical sense must remain, but also it behooveth a man to experience in his own self the mystery likewise.

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The Lord saith: *Love your Enemies*: The cross, passion, adversity, Death, &c. are our enemies, which we are to love, and embrace.

The natural man is surrounded with death, and which way soever he turns himself, he hath a sword presented to his sight: just as when one turns on this, and on that side should look about him, and still some body runs before his face: so also is judgment always meeting with the natural man, ready to snatch away his life, which way soever he turns himself. At last he yields up himself, when he can no more make his escape. But the spirit is in life; when the body (or nature) hangs stretched out upon the Cross. Zeal inkindled with divine pleasure, is a great pleasure, but the Cross and violent plagues follow after it. Myrrh was the last gift. For it is written; They offered Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. When I hear the Scripture, I am frightened, for it denoteth the natural death. Nature will have an appropriation, therefore communion is a death to it at which it is affrighted.

## CHAP. XVI.

**T**O desist from propriety, and to help another at our own loss, is a thing truly pleasant. To find gain in loss, and to abstain from that which is best in our esteem, and to prefer another thereunto, is a thing grateful to the mind. It would be truly a just thing, if he who hath the temporal goods, should so relieve his neighbour in want, that the one should be made equal with the other, nor should the advantage, or means of the one exceed the other: if any one is not yet arrived at or come up to this account, he ought to esteem it for a thing unjust, and therefore ought also to be sorrowful for it, as also to endeavour to bring it to that pass.

Let no man judge another in any business whatsoever, especially in that which he himself hath not yet experienced, and in which he hath not yet got the victory: for if he himself should fall into temptation, who knows, how he would behave himself in it. If any one therefore will  
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use modesty, he must hold his tongue upon the fall of others in temptation, and behold them with commiseration. For if any one himself hath been in temptation, and hath overcome, so that he remains constant in that victory, in the which he sees another to stumble and fall, without all doubt he was himself so afflicted with such streights, that he cannot possibly do otherwise but pity his neighbour thus overcome, although he do not defend his falling: seeing the case it self is in it self, so deplorable, that he needs not add to its load, from his judgings: This man therefore stands thus, and beholds all men with an eye of pity or commiseration, and neither judgeth, nor reproacheth them, for he knoweth that God alone is the hinderance to him, whereby it is, that he also does not run headlong in the way of these men, till he becomes equal and alike to them; and that he should easily be like unto them, if God should desert him, or not lead him in so wonderful a manner as he doth, and support him with so much long-suffering. These are the con-

siderations that suspend his rash judgment: whence it is, that the destruction of others cannot make him glad, but he rather is sad and sorrowful for it, and knows, that he is not better then they, and therefore ranks himself in the same rank with them, yea puts himself beneath them. And whatever is found to be better in himself that comes not but from out of the mercy of God, and not out of his own worth and strength.

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## CHAP. XVII.

**W**Here it is written: They confessed their sins and they were baptised in *Jordan*; there is meant an utter sinking down into all affliction and adversity, let it come from whence it will, and from hence it is, that we come to the acknowledgment of sins. Also whoever rejecteth or fleeth from any cross, or adversity, cannot come to the acknowledgment of himself: and where there is not a knowledge of ones self, there can be no crying to God. He that will come to  
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the true peace of God, he ought first to be exercised with all disquiet, especially when God exerciseth him by men who are difficult, cross, and morose: For better means then these cannot be found to prepare him for that condition. For those men, by whom God exerciseth good men, do apply all their diligence to spy out and observe in their neighbour somewhat that is reprehensible, though it be never so little, and that they expose maliciously enough, especially if other good men may hear or see it. And then it is, that it behooveth him, that is thus exercised, to hold his tongue, and not to defend himself: and though he may spy out many and greivous spots on his adversary, yet is he not to look at them, but only at his own spots, and in his heart to confess himself guilty of them. But when he doth not thus, but turneth his eyes on him, who accuseth him, he will yet more egregiously err: but so soon as ever he does observe it, he ought presently to turn away himself, and to take the matter as immediatly from the hand of God. For as long as a man is not yet freed,

freed, he still wandreth oftentimes in errors, though unwillingly. From and by afflicting, and morose men if we use them rightly for that end, for which they are given unto us of God, we may be much more advanced forward, then from and by men of great perfections, whilst we are still under sin.

As long as a man is in the state of *Martha*, so long he must labour, but when he shall come to the state of *Mary*, he laboureth no more: in the state of *Mary* a man is only under God; and Christ floweth down from above into a man like a river or stream.

A man transplanted by God, is, in his own eyes, the most uncertain of all men living: for he ought not to promise to himself the least part of life, so as that he can live one moment of time: so uncertain he is, that when he goes to bed, he knows not, whither he shall rise again, as if his life were to be taken from him, that very moment. If any other worldly man should behold the inside of this man he would be altogether astonished: yea the man, who seeketh God, and is  
not

not yet purified, could not abide thus, no not one hour only: for as a thing it self, and its image have a likeness externally, but inwardly do vastly differ, so is the case here. Just as if two men should stand together, and should give alms all the day long, and one of them should wish, that the business would quickly be at an end, because he doth it with a grutching heart: but the other should wish, that he might be always giving, yea he would give his whole self too, because he does it with a glad and a willing heart. Now when a man is sensible in himself of his churlish temper with contrition, and is therefore lorry, and wisheth, that he could do it with a willing mind, then the Lord will further help him, and will purge his floor. But they who are contented thus with an outside show, and thereupon think themselves righteous, all is not right with them.

Concerning the young beginner, this similitude is to be observed: An infant who cannot yet go alone would alwayes have somewhat whereby he might hold himself.

himself up, and when that is taken away from him, then he cries, and weeps, and stands and trembles, and thinks he shall fall: So also the Man that is not much exercised in acquiescence would always have somewhat to hold by, in God, wherewith to keep himself up: and when this is withdrawn from him, then he mourns, and weeps, and thinks that he shall fall irrecoverably. But God doth faithfully preserve him although he himself be utterly ignorant thereof.

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THE  
SAYINGS  
OF  
Mat. Mayer.

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The Third Book.

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CHAP. I.

**T**He Lord knoweth the way of the just, but the way of the wicked shall perish. God knoweth nothing but himself: God himself then is the way of the righteous, which perisheth not. The ways of the wicked are the creatures, which are corruptible; whence it is also that their way perisheth. For all the actions, business, and pleasure of the

the unrighteous at last sinks and falls into nothing.

O Father, this is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent: This is holiness, and God, above all images: and of this nature, or the natural man, partaketh nothing, but remaineth separated from God, and all his creatures: Alas, how great an affliction is this to Nature, to want images, when as the natural man cannot get above images: for all his joy, quiet, peace, advantage consist in, and together with images: if therefore God alone is present, his death is present. God alone is essence and being it self, and hitherto the natural man cannot come, or else he could never fall, for whatsoever cometh into God is eternal and unmoved.

All that are said of the fall, are said of the natural man, whilst he yet abideth in images, and appearances, and that state is to be consumed with its desire of growing on, and of increasing, before the essence it self is come: but when this is come, Nature must be subjected unto death,

death, and not have any life or joy in that essence; for that priviledge is not due unto Nature. And here it is that God filleth the place of man, and acknowledgeth, honoureth, and praiseth his own self; and he worketh, and setteth up what he pleaseth: and here God himself is present, and therefore the glory belongeth to God, and not to man. Here man stands naked in his poverty, and arrogates nothing to himself, because to God alone the glory is due. When the essence of a thing is present, all images vanish: and because the Natural man medleth with nothing but images, therefore he is robbed of these, when the thing itself is come, and then he lieth in death: yet his mind is taken up into the thing, that is, into life: but the flesh, or nature goes into death, nor draws any life, either from God, or from the creature. The natural labour of a man is this, to yield up one thing, that so he may receive a better, and to go out of one chamber or room, that so he may come into another more fair: And when he hath gotten all these things, for whose sake

fake he left the former, at last he is also cast out of them, and hath nothing, either here, or there, being deserted on both hands, and brought to want in either room: Yet so long as he sees any escape so long he laboureth, until this also faileth: Then he yields up himself, therein imitating the Ape, who defends himself, and labours, so long as he sees a way to evade, but being hindred of that he lyes down, and suffers himself to be beaten and knock'd, yea he admitteth all, though it be still against his will: So also the natural man suffers not these things willingly, but quite against his will.

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## CHAP. II.

**T**O do nothing ( in obedience to conscience under the Law ) but only to lye down, and suffer God's work, is a great affliction: Then we cry, Oh that I could do something. But action hath been before already, and it was done with delight and willingly. But when we must want, as well the worser, as the better also, and lie down in death  
without

without hope of rising again, or of reviving, this at last proves a wonderful streight. Nature had had before the knowlidge of the gain, and therefore action was sweet and pleasant to it: but here she suffereth under action, and knows no gain from it, therefore these things are bitter and sharp unto her, and are done against her will.

The knowlidge of a natural man consisteth in images. But God knoweth himself without image or notion. The creatures, wherewith brutes are fed, are made more noble in man, & man is made more noble in God. And so the creatures in such a man return again into God. And as the Creatures without cutting serve not for the use of Man, so neither without corruption, are they united to him, so also cannot Man be united to God without corruption, for all things are done in order.

Holiness is a worthy thing and unutterable, and the natural man participateth nothing thereof, because nature cannot come thither. *Paul saith: Other foundation can no man lay, but Christ.* Discrecion cometh into a man in one moment,  
and

and that moment is like to lightening, but is not the thing it self, for this follows after. When a man hath received that momentary lightening, his intellect is bound down under it. By one only shine, God doth more perfect the understanding, and discretion of a man, then a man can do himself in twenty years, nor yet is the thing it self present. Many there are that have that, and are dead, who yet never arrived at the thing it self.

In a time of necessity all my friends forsook me, and when I came unto them, that they should help me, they all went backwards from me. These friends were those Revelations, which I had, wherefore I resolved to trust in them no more, for assisting me in a case of Necessity.

He that would keep his senses from distraction, he must endeavour to be constant in prayers, for there is help. And he that would keep his senses, and preserve them from inroads, he hath every day something to do, for the case is with him as it is with a City besieged. For no City can either by the Emperour, or by

the Turk, be begirt with so greivous a siege, as this man is besieged with.

In this affliction, God is merciful to the man, and loves him, but the man knoweth it not, till at last he comes to feel it. God seems as if he were deaf, nor to be willing to know or to hear such men, but at length it is found, that the intention of God was always good: for it is afterwards apprehended, that God is merciful in our miserable streights.

When a man makes the creatures his aim and end, he deceiveth himself. The creatures ought to serve us to attain to our aim, *viz.* God, but they themselves ought not to be the scope: we ought to adhere to God, and not to the creatures, and to have a heavenly sense of things, and not an earthly.

### CHAP. III.

**H**E that standeth in God, to him all that happens are accounted to be God: he can impute nothing to the creatures, for he hath nothing to do with them,

them, but with God. He beholds God in the creature; doing with him either well or ill, because God acteth by and thro' it, & incites and spurs on the creature. And though as to the outward show, it seemeth, as if injury was done unto him, yet he judgeth not the creature, but himself and acknowledgeth that the just judgment is exercised upon him from the hand of God. Whither a man takes all things as from the hand of God, may from hence be known, if so be when he is injured by the creature, yet is he not therefore moved: but if he be moved at it, then he takes it from the creature, and not from God: and so he then proveth, that he yet stands in the creature. He that standeth in God, he hath no business with the creature, but with God, and knows him to be faithful, and just in judgments. To such a man no injury can be done, for whatsoever happens unto him, he knows it to be decreed by God.

*Jordan* is the River of judgment, to it judgment is due, over it judgment hangeth: thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness, said our Lord, when he was about to be baptised in *Jordan*. He

He who understands any thing, which he hath not experienced, hath no real understanding thereof: For he is like to him, who speaks of a fair Country, in which he never yet was.

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### CHAP. III.

**N**O man can have humility without affliction. *Herod*, the fiery dragon, and the mountain lifted up, would have killed the little infant, under the shew of devotion, or worship. The greatest danger is hanging over our heads from Pride, which dares kill every birth. Christs humanity is the highest of figures.

I desired and I sought: but whatever I sought and found, it now lies in death, and suffers destruction together with all that that was gain to me, and that too without all hope of recovery. For that which must rise again, is not the body which is sown, *for flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God*, and therefore must a man be slain, according to the Flesh: for it's according to the Flesh that a man dyes, and is made alive again  
ac-

according to the spirit. If a thing should rise again as it dyes, it would rise again in nature, and would be natural: but it is not so done; *Paul saith, It is sown a natural body, and it riseth again a spiritual body.* Nature partaketh not of the Kingdom of God, hence it is, that the death thereof is without all hopes. The natural man hopeth to be the heir of the Kingdom, and thinks that the promises of God belong unto him, and applies all that is written to himself: but then afterwards the thing comes to be otherwise apprehended when one is lead whither he would not, and God is glorified in and by his death. There nature is renounced, and it must be robbed of all salvation and be denyed. That which the natural man applied to himself, another taketh. They, that went out of *Ægypt*, desired to come into the promised Land, and did divide it out to themselves, but they abode in the wilderness and dyed there, and their posterity only entred into *Pa-  
lestine*. Whatsoever therefore the natural man understands, or sayes concerning these things, yet all this is against him,  
for

for it speaks of a sword, which is to kill him. Now they which are in this exercise, and speak any thing thereof, they speak it with affliction, and not with delight, nor can they ask for more then formerly, because it belongs not unto them, seeing all things tend to corruption and death: and into death a man is unwillingly dragged: he conveighs not himself thither, for if it stood at his dispose, he would never choose this state or condition: but he is caught and put thereinto by another, who is above him, and stronger then himself. Just as it is now with the death of the body, so the matter is also carried in this other death, of which it is said, *viz.* When any one thinks he hath found his Soul, and that he is confirmed in life, yet must he be subjected unto death. Now the Lord suffers him first to grow, and to increase, and grow ripe in youth: but when he is accomplished in that youth, he plainly careth not for death, and though he knows, that a time of dying must come, yet he laies it not close to heart, till he be grown old, then death frights him, and  
 finds

stands before his eyes, and yet neither then does he know how much misery there is there to be met with, for if he knew it, he would dye aforehand for mere grief. They who depart from earthly things, according to the testimony of conscience, that they may seek the salvation of their Souls, and to arrive at true ripeness of youth, rejoyce in this death, when they hear of it, and understand it because of the fruit that springs from thence: But they, who are in this death, are destitute of that joy: for if they could yet have any joy, they would still have life, and consequently could not be in death: because what ever dyes, is separated from all life. Posterity only lives and rejoyces. Nothing is due to corruption, but death and destruction, and in death all things are removed, as faith, and trust, and hope, and charity, and all joy, and every thing that is found, is to be forsaken. Now if it be to be forsaken and lost, it must first be found out, and taken up: for that which one hath not, he cannot give up: Now that which here is thus to be forsaken, is also destitute of hope, as was said:

said: and therefore this desertion is done  
 not with delight, but with great affliction.  
 The first desertion indeed is done  
 with joy, because then some better thing  
 is hoped for. But that hope is not here,  
 but in this point there is a total forsaking,  
 and a being made naked on all sides.  
 Gain, as they say, makes labour sweet,  
 But that labour, out of which no gain is  
 hoped for, is, without doubt, a matter  
 hard, and bitter, and sharp. Labour at  
 first was sweet, because gain sprung there-  
 from, viz. that the life or soul might  
 be found, which also was found. But  
 when this life is found, it is lost again in  
 that same dying, and a man is alienated  
 from himself, and God possesseth the place  
 of self, and there is no more mountain or  
 valley, but God alone: for Nature is  
 quite shut out.

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## CHAP. V.

IF sin were not, neither would death  
 be: if death were not, neither would  
 there be a resurrection, therefore all things  
 work together for good, for the elect.  
 Now that which first departeth from  
 K earthly

earthly things is presently after elevated into divine, and so remains in it self without death. For though it may dye as to its gross earthly nature, or creature, yet as to its self it is without death, as having only changed one state into another, and standeth still in its own life, and yet is but the natural man in his own propriety, though in a more pure estate. And thus he proceedeth from state to state, from a lower to a higher, from a pure one, to one more pure. And although all that is here said of states are by the means of death, and corruption accomplished, yet the man himself remains yet in himself without and beyond death, and corruption; for he is still the same, and cannot forsake his propriety, and stands in desire, as to God, as he before stood in respect as to the creature; and thus he ascends and goes forwards until he arriveth at the most pure and nobler state it is possible for him to arrive at. And all this is still but a figure and a notion, but a purer and noble figure: but if we must come above figures, into meer essence, he that thus ascendeth in images, must now also

eye even to himself: because by this his ascent and going forwards in images, he is prepared, so as he can be now touched with this death, by which he dyeth and is corrupted: and then he suffers a death of all his ornaments, and gifts, yea of his own self. And therefore he can never be restored more, nor be made glad by any means, because the joy is reserved for him that abides after death, as the Prophet saith: These shall be written for the generation to come, and the people which shall be created, shall praise the Lord. And again; Thy labour shall be rewarded, and thy posterity shall rejoyce therein. This is that glorious resurrection, and fruit, which springeth out of that death and corruption. And hence springeth glory to the Lord: This is that bottle, that can hold new wine, which a natural man cannot contain, though he should have a state very pure and noble: This was the seed whence conception arose, wherefore it is not in vain: nor is it in vain, that by the good help of God, he hath separated himself, and disposed himself unto divine things: for then is he

compelled to follow order, and so he acted rightly, and had not done rightly, unless he had done so; because he would have been disobedient to God, (who is a God of order, and leadeth a man in order) whence eternal death, that severe judgment of God would follow. A man must be led in order even unto his death: for unless he should follow order, he would certainly remain unprepared, nor would ever come there-  
to.

And therefore we must first endeavour to yield ready obedience, and always to attend to that which is next: and so also from the very first beginning, the cross will not be wanting, and by the way thereof, we shall go. By what a man departeth from earthly things, in obedience to his conscience, by that is he, at length, rightly prepared to come into the earth, that is, into the corruption of himself: and that which grows out of this, standeth before God. This corruption of the natural man ought to last even to the corporal death of a man, and after that the tender twig at last springeth forth.

forth. But the mind here, even yet before the corporal death, cometh into the resurrection, and is made a son of grace; and of the covenant, which consisteth in the blood of Christ, now poured forth for the remission of sins. Christ washeth us from sins, by his blood, which speaketh better things, then the blood of *Abel*: without the effusion of the blood of Christ, there is accomplished no remission of sins, or purification. It is a Most excellent thing to be freed and purged from sins: but to feel how that redemption is performed, and to experience that misery, is no pleasant matter, but exceeding sharp and difficult: Nor is it possible for a man, so much as to behold the thing, much less to execute and perform it. But it is God alone, who both beginneth and finisheth it, to whom nothing is deficient, because his works are all perfect: Now here a man does nothing else, but give himself up into tranquillity, and suffers the operation of God. The work of redemption God hath reserved to himself alone, and the glory thereof is his. And because God handleth the matter, no

man needs to say, that the thing is impossible: because the work and purpose of God goeth forwards. Here also do faith and patience take place, which also are the work of God, and not ours. When one serveth the Law of God in the mind, then in the flesh, he serveth the Law of sin. By how much the more of the sins of concupiscence and appetite, remaineth in the flesh, by so much the more misery, affliction, and death, the man hath: for he walketh not according to the flesh, as being that which condemned under the Law, and being hurried away violently by sin, is crucified by the Law of sin. Now where these things are not, there a man still walketh according to the flesh: and by how much the more there is at that time, of the sins of concupiscence, and of appetites in the flesh, so much the more of life and joy a man hath: but alas! it is a miserable life, which is followed by eternal death.

## CHAP. VI.

**B**Y what way or means, the Resurrection, and the judgment of God, are to be accomplished after this time, no man living can comprehend, or understand: for whosoever would know or understand that, he belongeth unto death, and becometh subject unto death. We have indeed a representation of the thing, but what the very thing will be in the future, is not lawful for us to know. When the thing it self is present, then at length it is known. All things to come are locked up from the natural man in darkness, and ignorance: yet he arriveth so far, as to know, that he knoweth nothing, &c.

By how much the greater is the streight, so much the more durable is the judgment: by how much the greater is the desertion, so much the nearer is any one to God.

For the most part inward affliction gets entrance by outward affliction: and outward affliction is as it were the gate, by which the inward entrencheth into a man.

For without outward affliction, nature searches out many escapes, that inward affliction cannot touch her. As if one kept in a dungeon, should still see light by one only cranny, and upon that account, the evils of being in a dungeon would become much easier to him: So also as Nature can catch its propriety, this internal affliction is hindered, nor can gain a room or place. For there is no place for inward sufferings, where Nature hath got escaping holes. Great is the misery where nature is thus kept in death, that she can hope for nothing: but acquiescence can bear all things.

He who is founded in death, destruction, and misery and is quiet in them, admits not comfort either of life or of joy, and is unmoved as to all things, which are grateful and acceptable, and no man can either comfort him, or terrify him. For if one should threaten spoiling, death, misery, and affliction to him, he already foreseeth all these, and yieldeth himself up unto them, and is conversant in them. And therefore he is immoveable, both in respect of things grateful, or of ungrate-

grateful : No man can either make him merry, or fright him. Death, and the withdrawing of all things, are indeed a terrour to him, but not such a one as now at length beginneth but now afflicteth him. Nor do grateful things exhilarate him, because he hath renounced all things, and he can re-assume nothing, and therefore he is unmoved. Here Nature is, as it were, ground between two Mill stones, because he acknowledges the judgment of God upon him to be just, and suffereth such misery, that he must thus behold the thing, and the thing must then be done. But he is not like other malefactors, who are outwardly in affliction and captivity: For these if they could kill their keeper, they would readily do it, that they might get loose, yea if they could, break the windows, gates and walls. But this other sort do not thus behave themselves, but are subjected unto the will of God, and in it do quietly rest: and although they could do as other do, yet that they cannot desire: there is therefore a great difference betwixt the coaction of those, and of these.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VII.

**G**od himself is the uncreated Salvation, which spreads it self forth round about: just as the Sun is every where dispersed abroad, where it can be received: But where it cannot be received, the fault is not in it self. If therefore this universal uncreated Salvation, which is God himself ought to take place in man, then must the proper, included, and created salvation of man perish: for this is not God himself, and therefore it cannot stand in the sight of God; and a man must, on that score, be cast into death, and destruction, and be deprived of his Soul, which he had with much labour saved: and when by his labour he was come so far, that he could not get further, then was it time for God not to be as self but to cast him into death: that so he might by grace establish that in the man, which the man by the Law could not gain thorough much labour. For whatsoever Christ represented in life and doctrine, is impossible to be actively fulfilled, yet it must be fulfilled in death.

It behooveth a Man to dye, that God himself may effect the matter and that the glory thereof may not be Man's.

It is not labour, but Regeneration. Christ bringeth grace, and that which is grace, is not the labour of man: and afterwards a man, having passed his own proper created Salvation, comes unto the universal increated Salvation, which is God himself: and this Salvation knoweth God, and with this a man can stand before God, for God can stand before himself. And this man no more judgeth any one. For this Sun hath nothing strange in it, with this salvation a man hath communion without appropriation. And here it is, that the communion of Saints taketh place.

Life repulsed by one, fleeth to another in which it lives, till it self also dyeth. When the life dyeth as to the creature, it is nothing esteemed off in respect of that life which dyes as to it self: for there life yet remains alive, and receiveth other and greater objects then it had before: and in them it then liveth, and hath only changed one for another, and instead

instead of a worser, hath received a better, nor is it dead in it self, but is still the very same life: but when a life dyeth to its own self, there is affliction unspeakable, when it can have nothing, whereby it can be sustained, and which can refresh, or comfort it: for the destruction thereof is without hope, for when it falleth, it can rise up again no more: because it falls a natural thing, and it riseth again a spiritual thing, and therefore like seeketh like, the old bottle cannot contain new wine: a new patch agreeth not with an old garment, therefore we must dye to deformity when conformity is to be performed.

It is very necessary to have discretion: but no man can have it, but he that hath the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, of which the Prophet speaketh, and the last of them is, The fear of the Lord; for when one receiveth the former gifts, then at last he is round about filled with the fear of the Lord, and the Lord is feared in all.

## CHAP. VIII.

**A**Bout the propheticall promises of God, we must always observe, whom they respect: for they belong not to the natural man, and he participateth nothing of them, but only his destruction.

Whatever is extent in the Prophets, and the Apostles have wrot, is praised as that which is beautiful, yea and it is beautiful: but to the Natural man it is death and he participateth nothing thereof. Although therefore he shall praise it as that which is beautiful, yet it is his death: yea and therefore he must come into death, if it must be applied unto him. But Christ is constituted by his father, to be the Saviour, that he may apply all that, and fulfil it by the croise.

No man that is not dead cometh under grace and the Gospel: therefore they falsely boast, who glory that they are under grace without death. A man not dead is first to be subdued by the Law, and therefore is to be prepared for death,  
by

by means of which, he is freed from the Law, and comes under grace: as long as he is alive, he belongs to the subjection of the Law, but when he is, after that, dead, he is under grace, for Christ is not the servant of sin, that he might leave our sins in their own state, but he came, that he might free us from sin, which is done by the means of death. Sin is punished with death. And Christ is no defender of the natural man, that he should remain alive. For if he should do that, we should come without death into God, which is impossible. Let every one therefore abstain from false boastings and defend no unrighteousness, for that thing will never find success. The whole world is full of false boastings concerning Christ, but we must not be conformed to the word, as *Paul* saith.

A man is secretly besieged by many things, of which he is ignorant, and he then at last comes to apprehend it, when they are withdrawn from him. Also a man sometimes apprehendeth a defect in himself and is ignorant what it should be which oftentimes is so great, that it must  
be

be qualified by the Lord. The misery, defect and death of nature is rather to be born with, then to fly to complaints, anger, and murmurings. Suffer and hold thy tongue, and thou shalt be advanced with help and assistance. Break not out into words, but repress their motion. Flee not from the affliction of thy Nature for come it from whence it will, it will bring with it great gain unto thee, and will be a benefactor to thy heart. If thou shalt not do this, thou shalt have a disturbed mind, and shalt not be advanced forward by any exercise.

There are many things in which a man followeth concupiscence, where yet he pretends to another fair outside show. Whatever is beyond necessity, is contrary to God, and to all righteousness, yea and to a man's own self. No man ought to boast of his exercise before others, but to walk in the sight of God, and to rest quiet in him. For its enough if God seeth it. All high-mindedness is to be avoided, least we be esteemed for some body before others. Exercise thy self before God.

To

To be able to tolerate ignorance, is wisdom. It is the part of grave old men to wink at the folly of youth.

When any one lies in death, and is filled therewith, and both inwardly and outwardly is without rest both day and night, and seeth others full of life, there it is expressed, what lies hid in him, whether life or death. That which hath renounced time, cannot assume death, nor acknowledge it, although it cannot flee from the same. The death of all things is to be promoted.

## CHAP. IX.

**T**Here is no need that any one should be solicitous how he ought to come into death and corruption, for it comes in its own time, and cannot be suppressed: as a woman big with child, when the hour of the birth comes, cannot hinder it. Whatever a man knows and understands in this death, it is contrary to him: for it is as it were a ditch in which he lies putrifying and corrupting. No ratiocination, nor understanding delighteth him.

If yet he could be delighted with any thing, he would also still live. Whatsoever therefore he hath, applieth, speaketh, or handleth, it is all done in death, and he himself is detained in death, that he may putrefie, and corrupt, even unto the corporal death, and this is that ending or conclusion of the natural man. Now as this dead man hath, understandeth, speaketh, thinketh, and applieth all things infected with death, and lies as it were in a ditch, in which he putrefieth: so on the contrary a living man hath, understandeth, speaketh, thinketh, and useth all things qualified with life; and as the other is in a grave, so this is in the house of joy, where he eats, drinks, dances, sings, till he also comes into death, then all these things cease, and he can receive none of them. The Natural man never transcendeth imagination: and though he becometh so high therein, that he dares to touch God, yet even then is he overthrown, as it is written: Though he should build his nest in heaven, yet thence will God throw him down headlong. Then all is done with him, as with

with that rich man, who cloathed himself gorgeously, and was fed with the daintiest food, but after all that, he dyed and was buried; and then, whatever had been pleasant, departed from his Soul, and could no longer receive it, because his prayers were not heard. Yet his mind is, in this place, separated from Nature by the cross, and is taken into God, and liveth in him, but Nature is detained in death, under the law of sin, from which the mind is freed by the cross, and standeth under grace, serving the Law of God, and is free from sin, from which Christ hath freed him: And so is repulsed by the mind, in the bottom of the humanity (*Tawler* calls it the lowermost powers) out of which the vitiousness is so ejected, that it never can return thither again.

When the natural man did stand in his own increase, he did accomplish that work according to his own will, that is, the will of Man: But when God hath gained to be in the place of self, he effecteth his work according to the will of God, but contrary to the will of man.

If a man follows his concupiscence in small things, he follows it also in great things, that which he must do, that he cannot omit. For it is a thing tried, and proved by experience: If therefore one would not follow his lust in great things, he is not to follow it then in small things: for he who is willing to omit great matters, will also omit smaller. To be deficient to ones self as to Nature, and to suffer therein, is very pleasant to the mind. For whatever is cut off from the flesh, by reason of conscience, is profitable to conscience. We must suffer in Nature for the sake of conscience, but not in conscience for the sake of Nature.

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## CHAP. X.

If a man should have the impression of the knowledge of himself, viz. so as that he should truly know himself there could not be one of the sons of men so vile and despicable, beneath whom, he would not submit himself, yea account himself unworthy to have any converse with him. That a man is so evil, so troublesome

troublesome, and so morose towards his neighbour, proceeds from hence. *viz.* because he, hitherto, thinks himself to be something, in time, and in eternity, nor will he be made ashamed. To be in indignation because of adversity, is a sign that a man is, and is willing to remain something, which something must notwithstanding be turned into nothing: Whatever thereof is contrary to this something, must be born with or endured, that that may be reduced into its nothing.

The shortest and usefulest rule for going forward, <sup>102</sup> is this, *viz.* that every one should satisfy his own conscience. Conscience is a book, in which we must study daily. That whichevery one will bring forth out of the appetite of the natural man, by doing, omitting, or speaking, &c. that ought to be intermitted, though the thing should be lawful in it self unless it were subject to mutability. Wherefore we may not imitate them, who are in death, because they do all things in death, which another would do in life. For that which is dead is free from every thing:

thing: Now to be thus free from things, is the same as to have no life in things. In whatsoever therefore one hath yet a life, he is not free from that thing, whence it follows, that he is to endeavour to his utmost to abstain from it, if he would act rightly. ( For we must satisfie Conscience, and in all things study to be obedient to it. ) If any one saith, that he is free from any thing, unless he did it with affliction and grief, but not with delight and pleasure, he saith not the truth: For that is still to him instead of a prison, in which he is detained a prisoner: so that he is bound, and not free: therefore let no man deceive himself, nor boast before the time. He, who is to come into a more sublime state, must be lifted up thereunto in order, and by degrees, and it behooveth him to proceed in those ways which lead him thither.

We must beware of a double heart: Whosoever is ingenious hateth it. The dissembler, and the hypocrit have indeed an out-side fair show: yet he will not indeed desist from his lusts. For he  
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does not think it to be his concern, to be led contrary to his own will. Fame and Glory is a short and a vain joy.

The new creature is not an action, but a generation: we come unto it by the cross: for the ways which lead thereunto are the Cross and affliction.

## CHAP. XI.

**C**Hrist hath assumed our nature but not our sin. That which we footten mention concerning Nature, we mean of it, as it is corrupted by sin, and not as it is in it self: For nature in it self is good, but it is corrupted by sin, and fermented with sin: just as when water and blood are mingled together, nothing but blood is discerned, though both the matter, and substance of water be still there. Christ hath assumed naked or meer nature, as it is without blood, that is, without sin: so he hath assumed our flesh, but not our sinful flesh. In the death of a natural man the will of God only ruleth, viz. because that God so willeth it, and it so pleaseth him, and his

his judgment thus requireth it: Hither a man is to refer himself: this is his only rest and quiet, *viz.* the will of God. Things plainly happen otherwise, then one thinketh, all things observe another manner then a man thinketh.

## CHAP. XII.

**T**Here is no coming unto an internal state, or spiritual exercises, except first all the ceremonies are broken by affliction. The warm bed is to be left. There are men in the world, that for the sake of Idolatry exceed that hardship, and patiently endure the cold and incommo-  
dities: why may not the same be done for the sake of the true worship? and though, at the beginning, when one is settled in a custom of lying in bed, the thing will not be without difficulty, yet, in time, it will become easy, and a man will hate his bed, and the too much use thereof, and will not use it but for necessity. All things whatsoever which are at first done with great difficulty, they become gentle and easy by use. A man must

must combat stoutly, and with affliction too, that laying aside his confusion, he may be brought into order, and consequently that God may draw nearer unto him. He that is kept in confusion, and neglecteth the means of his getting forwards, cannot be promoted: but many years, and times are spent with him, so that he still remains that which he was: and the fault is in some prop or support he hath, either secretly or manifestly, as well in small as in great matters. Where Nature is crucified, there she wants a prop, for on what another is upheld and propp'd up with, on that she cannot leane her self. We must beware of every affair, that is used for to pass away time sportfully and unprofitably: time is to be weighed in a ballance, and to be spent on God, for it is precious, and runs swiftly.

Whatsoever is to a man most difficult and bitter, that he must do, and whatsoever is most easy and sweet, that he must omit. To keep himself pure in impurity, is a piece of art, and commendable: but let no man, that is already out of the reach

reach of such, mingle himself with them; for that would be a rashness: Whereas he, that is in them already, ought to enter into this combate and to conquer the enemy, and with tears and sorrow, break thorough the hostile troops. That which is here said of impurity is not to be understood of those things which are in themselves impure, ( for no purified person can pass thorough them, when they are prohibited, and are not, in the least, allowed of ) but of things, that are not impure of themselves, yet are such, by which a man may be polluted, by reason of his own proper impurity, when he satisfieth not his own conscience, and walketh not streight forwards in the way of God.

He, that will not suffer, is afflicted in the earth. He erreth in his understanding, when one is lead into the revelations and knowledge of many things, but he himself remains without, and beyond them. The Lord saith: *What would it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own Soul.* He also that went into the marriage without a wedding-garment

ment, was cast out. For those things which he had notionally by knowledge, and in the understanding, he had not substantially, and really. In the science of things a man glorieth, and is glad, and delighted when he speaketh, or writeth of them, all things are done with joy. But when the substance or essence of things cometh, he lieth down in death. Nor can he rejoyce or be delighted, because he partaketh nothing and hath nothing therein, but his death and destruction. The Science or knowledge of them can no more make him merry, because they are contrary unto him. And whatever he knoweth, readeth, heareth, or thinketh concerning them, that all make against him, because all these things are contrary, or aduerse unto him.

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### CHAP. XIII.

**W**Hen a man lies in death, he is no longer his own, for he is plainly alienated from his own self. Hence therefore he ceaseth from labour, neither does he act any more, and God standeth

in the stead of himself, and fulfill, and erecteth that in his death, which had not been done in his life. For whatever he handled in his life, he did it at all by images : but here in death God hath established the very substance it self; and this is a grace, and the generation which is made in death. That which Christ denoteth, cannot be fulfilled; for it is a generation which is of it self passive, in the destruction, and death of a man. It is impossible to man, therefore God himself doth it, whence it is, that to him alone the glory is due: A man who is in death, is not afflicted by the delay of time: but he who yet hopeth for joy and pleasure, he is afflicted with every delay, until that cometh, which was hoped for. But the dead lie down without hope, nor is there any thing which they expect, for they are forsaken, and stripped of all. But in these things, they acknowledge the will of God, and comfort themselves, that God so willeth. The will of God is their couch.

When a man gives himself up to one lust, then one follows another, but then

a man hath to do, as it were, with a Lion, who if any one lays hold on one part of any thing, he ever draweth it nearer: So also if one yields himself up to one lust, he also quickly yields to another, and so the world gaineth him again, till he be wholly swallowed up therein. But then at last the man truly neglecteth himself, and expecteth the severe judgment of God.

#### CHAP. XIV.

**W**Hen a man perceiveth, that he is willing to abide in his present state, and to be at rest, and to subsist in it, then the Spirit ceaseth, and the man slips down out of the spirit, into the flesh: there the rule or government of the Spirit is hindred, and the literal Kingdom is set up: there then is no longer a spiritual Kingdom, nor an increase, nor proficiency, but a going backwards, and a leaping back again into the flesh, and into the creature: And then beginneth hatred, and persecution towards the adverse part, that they will not so much as receive them into

into their house, that is, they will by no means come near them, for the sake of that. And thus these must suffer by and from them, for the sake of the Name of Christ, even as also they suffer in their flesh, for the sake of sin, by the Law of sin. For the flesh of these persons, together with its lusts and affections are, by the Law, lifted up from the earth, upon the cross, and the lusts and appetites of Nature are cut off, and rejected by their objects, that they can no longer use them, nor draw life from them. The universal increated Salvation hath in it self no judgment concerning others: for really it is without judgment: nor hath it any need of any means, by which it may abstain from judgment, because it hath no such thing in it self. But proper Salvation hath hitherto carried along with it, judgments, and if it must abstain from them it must do it by some means, which the real Salvation wanteth: Now those means are the creatures, for the essence is God himself, who endureth no creature. Before the essence cometh all images must vanish. Real salvation hideth, or with-

draweth it self from no man, neither is it separated, nor included, nor made proper: But if any one secludeth, or separateth himself, he withdraws, or hides himself from it, then the blame is not to be laid on that, but on him, who doth it. Thus is the man who is in this Salvation, and where this Salvation taketh place.

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## CHAP. XV.

**T**He chiefest and greatest affliction of all the damned is this, that they are separated from God; so that he that feels that separation, feels the pains of hell. God is essentially very good, nor is there any good, but God, he therefore that is deprived of that hath nothing. Whence it's said: He is a poor man, who goes to hell.

For some years together all things have fallen away from me: yet hitherto the chief and real death followed not thereupon, as now it does. Death indeed was always present with me, but it was never essential death till now. For here

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a man lieth in death and destruction, nor can he take or use any discretion, nor think this, or that, nor conceive images, unless it be, that he lyes essentially in death, and that death is really present: And when, in this misery, one begins to talk of these, or the other divine things, even for that, Nature is to be punished again, and to be crucified with yet a more bitter death. Nature cannot enter in again, as she went out, for here she took breath again, and was recreated, and yet there belongeth nothing to her, but destruction and death. They who lye in this affliction, if one propoundeth to them any comfort of life, they esteem it for poison, and for bitterness, and for adversity, nor can they listen to it. Even as if one who is lead into death, looking round about him, should see all and every one to be dead, all whomsoever he beholdeth, yea his kindred, and familiar friends. Here let it be observed, how great is that affliction, to be deserted of all, and to draw life no where, and to be a captive and bond-slave unto death, even to the desertion of all creatures

But God ennobleth the case by changing it and that thorough a great difficulty of sufferings, when they are not ennobled, as to an outward fair shew, before the flesh, but in Spirit. The former state is always more noble then the following, but not in the sight of God: for the tents of *Kedar* are black; but God knoweth them to be otherwise inwardly. Christ comes not as it was expected: His face is sad, like a man of sorrows, &c.

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## CHAP. XVI.

**T**He following combate is always terrible in respect of the foregoing, and that which follows that, is yet more terrible, and so is every other, after the former so that the preceding conflicts, in respect of the following, are always light, though they also, in respect of those that were afore them, were heavy. And all this God doth, who leadeth a man by and thorough these hard ways, till he hath rightly prepared him, and rendred him purged from all dross, and filth: and this a man suffers, and God operates.

operates. A man is overcome by God, and passively lead :: and though at first he was also active under Law ; yet afterwards he is not so. Because thorough this whole state, even to the following, he suffereth, and the state which followeth in respect of the foregoing is horrible, whereas before that it did seem to be noble: yet in respect of man, and not of God. For by how much the sublimer is the corruption by so much the more noble will be the fruit : for a man is still lead more deeply and deeply into affliction. The former state is always more eligible in respect of that which follows, so that a man, as far as he is in the foregoing, cannot account of himself in regard of the following, an heretick.

When Christ saith: If they shall say, *Lo here is Christ, go not forth*: he would say this: *We must not depart from affliction.*

Into them, who lie down in death, Life cannot enter : They who have not yet lain down in death, and yet obey the governance of their conscience stand in the midst between Life and death : they

are subject to great labour and strife, who endeavour by the help of conscience to suppress that life which they have in themselves. These men, as yet, can know no death, until they come into that state, but yet they believe it. They who are in death, even their very cogitations do lye in death, that they can be delighted with nothing neither with God, nor with the creature. For if they could still be delighted with any thing by thinking or cogitation, that would still prove to be a life, which cannot be in this case.

If one placed under a naked sword should be asked, whether he took delight at that time in any thing, without doubt he would answer, that he sat in death, nor could possibly fancy to himself any other thing, but a certain and a real death. If such a one should get up on his legs, to look about, on life, and things temporal, he would see nothing before him, but a cloud, that is judgment, and death. The state of such men is plainly miserable and painful; nor is it to be wished for: as if perhaps we should say: O would to God we were like such or such: but this is to be

be wished, that the will of God is to be accomplished in us, that we may bear it, and be united with it. Moreover those men who thus lie in death, have little or no comeliness in them, but are very much deformed, and therefore he who is conversant with them, must beware, least he imitates their words or behaviours. For whatsoever they do, or omit to do, are silent in, or speak, it's all performed in death, nor can any life, joy, comfort, or pleasure lay hold of them in this state. They are untouched by delectation and are filled with death. • If therefore he who is without the bounds of this state, should imitate their words and actions, he would do thus, whilst he is still full of life, and with a feeling of comfort, of joy, of pleasure, &c. and then would he wander egregiously; because he would be in no want of delectation, in regard he would still remain full of life: and therefore let him have a great care, and keep his life safely; least he put it forth into jeopardy: for though he be still often accused in his conscience for negligence yet inwardly he hath much joy,  
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and comfort, which they, who are in death do utterly want.

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## CHAP. XVII.

**T**hey who are not yet dead, ought with great diligence, and severity, to abstain from lusts: whereas they who are dead, have no such matter: For those means, in which lusts do make their abode, are, by the good help of judgment, so shattered, and broken, that delectation wholly ceaseth in them: because these men are dead, as to these matters, and whatsoever they do whether they eat, or drink, or speak, &c. they do all in death and with affliction: also this death is a sensible death, nor is it like that, in a post, that wanteth sense: neither also is it such a death, which being once accomplished, then ceaseth, but it is an incessant death, every day, for they sensibly dye every particular day. But for the others, who still abide only in continency, they ( as I said ) have not this death, but are still alive. For those means, in which lusts do abide, are not,

in these men, as yet condemned to death: and therefore they ought to abstain, under the labour of the Law, and sedulously to beware, because they can scarce do any thing, which is not done by the use or help of life. But they who are dead, do the same thing in death, with misery, and affliction. And therefore, as was said above, he who liveth, must not regard him that is dead, to imitate him, until he himself also is arrived at this state of death: then are those things granted unto him, and are become pure unto him, which, whilst he was alive, were impure. Yet is it not here so to be understood, that one may therefore think, that unjust things are lawful for him, or are pure, as at this day, some erroneous spirits (*David George and Henry Nicholas*) do profess, who think such things are lawful for them, which are not of themselves lawful, but are wicked and unjust before God, and the Elect: by which they demonstrate that they falsely boast themselves of their dying, and death. Let all those, who desire to find out God beware of these kind of men.

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In the book of *Psalms* it is said: *Thou shalt change them, but thou thy self art still the same, and thy years shall not fail, &c.* He who feeleth this mutation for his part, and a permanency on the part of God, that man feels some-what.

Let no man so much esteem of the sufferings of the Soul as to contemne the afflictions of Nature, for the matter, upon examination, is otherwise found.

When a man standeth in the trial between God and Nature, and is equally on both sides grievously afflicted, so as that he must deny one or the other: Let (I pray) that man bear up, and let him deny nature, and not God: Let him (I pray) bear up vigorously, and not shrink: for God helpeth him.

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## CHAP. XVIII.

**W**HEN a man's props fall from under him, by which he was born up, it is a sign, that he himself will quickly fall into ruin: and then it is said, *Alas!* how long will this endeavour of appropriation last? shall this my Meity (or mineness) always endure? and then  
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misery and affliction rush in, when that net of propriety is to be unloosened: because that is to done by the means of many sufferings.

He who knoweth grace rightly, is in great affliction for he is wholly made sin, and hath nothing in wch he can be at rest. By how much the less one hath of grace, glory, illumination, devotion, and of strength, when he suffers the mortification of Nature, by so much the more excellent and worthy is that esteemed, in the sight of God. But when one suffers with the glory of an exceeding high grace, with devotion, and with virtue, &c. the thing is easy, nor is it so highly esteemed, as when one labours under want of all those excellencies, and yet is afflicted: yet is not one better then another, for he that lies in the sun, how ( I pray ) is he better then another, who doth not lie in the sun? except it be because he hath need of greater humiliation, which must be done for him by and thorough so much mercy: so that he must bow himself down under the feet of all men, and submit himself unto them.

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Conscience is our next neighbour, with whom we are to be reconciled before God will accept our offerings: therefore we ought rather to suffer the loss of our own selves, then to keep an evil conscience: yea all adversities are rather to be accepted, then that Conscience should torment us. He that hath an evil conscience, cannot be advanced forward. An evil conscience is a great burden. We must therefore use all diligence that our conscience be brought into an innocency: but that can never be effected without affliction, and without the want of all things pleasant. He who is full of lusts is often afflicted, when those things are not done, which he desired.

It is not wisdom to reveal the folly of another, unless one hath a very lawful cause; else the business of another is not to be discovered. The art of God, is God himself, and it is taught by God, and infused without any means: although some certain things should preceed, which have been useful so to dispose a man, that God can immediately touch him. It's no art to have no care in great abundance, but

but by care to abstain in want, comes to this at length, not to be solicitous. If the eye be shut to lust and appetite, we may endure much: Affliction can bring it so to pass, as any one can deny himself in great things, which without affliction, he could never have renounced. He that is free from many, hath need also to be set free from himself, not that he be a captive to himself but be freed from himself. Many think, that they have discretion, which notwithstanding they have not yet: He in whom discretion is to be found, both bitter and sweet things must have been tasted by him. To be free in Conscience from those accusations, which are wont to be made dayly, is a great gift of God, and that liberty can advance a man unto a notable growth, if he can use it rightly. No man knows, what he hath, but when he hath lost the thing, then at length a man acknowledgeth what he once had. A man is full of the study of appropriation, so that he always thinks, that this or that is due unto him, and to be his, and that he hath a right unto that. He that standeth in God, walks,  
speaks,

speaks, thinks, and operates, as in the sight of God, nor is he solicitous, how men do receive it. Men are willing to hide under an evil and false worship, those defects, in which they are therefore involved, because they have not satisfied their consciences. And that false worship is therefore accounted for the true, and remaineth unknown, but when one satisfieth his conscience, then it is detected to be a false worship, for when one satisfieth conscience, there conscience is cleared, and illuminated, and there a man is always more and more streightned, and at length comes into that affliction, anxiety, and sorrow: by which he is so advanced forwards, and his conscience is so clarified and illuminated that he can gain a true discerning of things, and no falsity can ever deceive him to all eternity.

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## CHAP. XIX.

**A** Certain man said: That burden and trouble, which my neighbour hath upon my account, does affect me with much grief: formerly such a matter was

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to me a light thing, and not grievous, but afterwards it became a running sore. No man ought to use any liberty towards his neighbour: after that I had relieved my neighbour by my own proper trouble, and had transferred the burden from my neighbour upon my own self, I found my self notably advanced forwards. And when I did not so do, I was thereupon still under blame, for in this very particular I walked not in the sight of God. If a man must be advanced, it behooves him to be quick-sighted, that he may rightly converse with his neighbour. It is often times necessary, that one should neglect his exercises and his zeal for the sake of his neighbour, and he shall commend himself unto God, nor shall he therefore suffer any damage. The levite and the Priest would not perform that; because they were about their business, and had their exercises, and took care of themselves, but left their wounded neighbour without help, applying to him no compassion. There was a true cause which yet they did not observe, whence also it was, that they were not praised of  
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the Lord. A man attends fervently unto prayer, and yet let him rightly weigh the causes of things: and God will know he is to be advanced. Oftentimes an advancement springeth from such a thing, out of which there seemed, that an hindrance would arise.

When a man observeth his conscience, then is he always more and more streightned, that sometimes he knows not which way to turn himself.

To neglect all things, unto which lust reacheth out its hand, and not to use them afflicteth a man: When Nature is suspended, then is not a man rejoyced, though he hath the affluence of all things, nor is he made sorrowful, though they should be wanted: if good things do abound yet they are not his: for he cannot enjoy them truly, so as to have a life in them: but if they be wanting, he hath lost nothing. Wherefore he passeth between both parts unconcerned, neither being rejoyced in those, nor made sorrow in these.

To deny ones proper commodity and gain; and for our neighbours sake and ad-

advantage to suffer detriment, affecteth the conscience with great pleasure: but if one seeks commodity and gain, by the detriment of his neighbour, or advantage by his neighbour's injury, or honour by his neighbour's disgrace, then the conscience cannot be at rest, and at last becomes grievously gauged. Much is placed in this point, so that he who desires to be advanced let him rightly use or handle his neighbour, let him walk with frequent exercisings, and with severity, as under the Law, and in all things, let him observe his conscience. He that spareth himself and does detriment to his neighbour, rather then to himself he can never be advanced. Also a man ought not to admit without lawful causes, that his neighbour should serve him.

That the Fathers of old did so openly avoid gormandizing, and gluttony, this was the reason, that gluttony is the chiefest of the vices, under which all vices are contained. Gluttony is the bull-work and defence of all the other vices, which being broken down, they can no longer maintain a war, but the man goes on to fight

fight them, and to get the victory, and one victory after another, till, by God's help, he quite conquereth his carnal life, and begins a happy life, that so the flesh being corrupted and undone, the Soul begins to bud forth, and is gained. But when afterwards these things are again to be lost, certainly that death and affliction is much greater, then was the death of the flesh.

In things necessary, as meats, drinks, sleep, cloaths, &c. they ought always to be only so taken as Nature can be contented therewith, and not that pleasure or joy may arise out of them. Such a use of them takes away all superfluity, so that Necessity only may remain as in the sight of God.

Time is to be esteemed as too precious and worthy then to be squandred away in the reading of unprofitable books. Conscience ought to be above all cases, nor ought any case to prevail at all, if it be against conscience.

Carnal afflictions, such as are these, to be spoiled for the sake of the word of God, to suffer persecution, to be captivated, to be

be tormented, &c. these, I say, I have not tried, but I highly esteem them, and the more, because I have not experienced them, rather then if I had experienced them. That which is beyond Necessity is to be omitted, and not used. If any thing exceeds Necessity, omit that: for it will be grateful to you, nor will you repent thereof, although, at present, it may afflict you. If you will not do thus, greater pains and afflictions will arise therefrom. That which is at present grateful, at length breeds sorrows, and that which at present affecteth with sorrow that at last will bring forth pleasure. That which is sweet at first, does at last give a bitter tast. *Boethius* saith: *The end of pleasure is pain.* Also he saith: *There is no sin without pain, and affliction, as there is no virtue without its reward.* A man cannot be inwardly advanced, nor have peace and rest, unless outwardly he be withdrawn from all things, in which he liveth, and which he desireth, and lusteth after, and is imployed about slender and mean objects: But thence resulteth great affliction, without which not-

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withstanding no man is advanced. Affliction is the food of the Soul: To dye to the flesh is the life of the Soul: Disquiet, affliction, and pain, as to the flesh, is peace, joy, and pleasure to the Soul: for the one is also contrary to the other.

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## CHAP. XX.

**I**T is necessary that a man should be made ashamed in all things, and glory be given to God alone. We must condole with our neighbour: if one cannot do that, yet must he hold his tongue, and abstain from rash judgment.

When all things succeed to a man, according to Nature, pleasure, appetite, and proper commodity, these are not the means of advancing him towards God: but when all things go with a man against Nature, *viz.* otherwise then Nature requireth, and against delight, and appetite, then whole dayes are consumed in afflictions, and then one may be advanced in God. When things flow according to the current of will and Nature, then there is nothing towards advancement:

ment: but when we must sail against the current, with men, from whom many grievous things are to be born, and who are altogether adverse unto us, therein is advancement: for such men are both the means, and the cause of advancement: And then also that, which is evil in us, is felt, and for its sake we can be affected with sorrow, and can confess it in the sight of God. Therefore prosperous things are not to be sought, nor adversity to be avoided. For adversity is always safe, and does advance us in the Knowledge of our selves. And it behooveth a man to be wary, and to be in perpetual exercise, and trial.

Sweetness is deceitful, and Nature desireth it. Bitterness is a Medicine, and Nature hateth it, and therefore we must do, not that which we will, but that which we hate.

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## CHAP. XXI.

**T**O abstain from inordinate and unprofitable words, makes a man as if he were dumb, and causeth him to be

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silent

Silent in many cases, which else he would talk of. A lascivious tongue extinguisheth zeal, and renders a man inordinate, and weak, and unfit to overcome temptations.

In which way soever I am willing to go forwards, according to life, the gate is shut against me: and then death is my refuge. I must therefore shut the eye of life, and rest quiet in death. If I had before-hand known this affliction, in which I now lie, I had dyed for mere grief: but now when I am in it, God keeps me in it, and I can bear it. I never before had believed, that the case would be thus, as now I find it. Judgment doth so drive me, that I can have neither comfort, nor hope, nor faith, either in God, or in the creature: Thus the Natural Man is suppressed by judgment, and thus the rod hangeth over him, and which way soever he looks, death meets him: but the mind is free. I have no torture of Soul, and such sufferings as *Francis Spira* endured, I am ignorant of them.

*Adam* was created pure in spirit, Soul

and Body ; but by his fall he departed from God, and tumbled down into his ownself : he became estranged from God, and was made his own propriety, and a servant of the creatures. And this same growth of self, is nothing else but our desire, endeavour, or study of appropriating to our selves, which afterwards is so subjected unto judgment, that it can have no comfort, or life either in God or in the creature. Therefore it behooveth us to be reduced again into nothing, in respect of all things about which we are made somewhat, and then at length God will be all himself, in the man himself, and that instead of his own propriety: and then a Man is restored without propriety: And then a man findeth God with God, and serveth God with God, and that is pleasing to God: For God hath no good pleasure but in his ownself. Judgment is exercised upon this his propriety, and then that loseth all hope of restitution, and nothing is due unto it, either as to God, or as to the creature, Thus it may be understood, what the fall of *Adam* is, viz. appropriation: There-

cre also he is to expect judgment, and that too must be acknowledged to be just.

## CHAP. XXII.

**W**ithout affliction it is impossible to be promoted in God, and to have inward peace: for where one is to be promoted, or advanced in God, and to have inward peace, there it behooveth the natural man to be purged from lusts, and to have no more delight, life, or joy in the creature, but to want all these, and to be suppressed in death, and to be fastened to the cross. So the Apostle saith: *They that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof.*

It behooveth me to give place to judgment, and therefore I am without all solicitude for things temporal, whence they may be acquired: For I have not so much time left, that my senses can meditate on such a thing. It behooveth me to be stripped of the images of all things, and therefore I remain without purpose, and without

without counsel, nor do I know, what in time to come I am to do, or leave undone, to be silent in, or to speak; but as things are at present, so they glide away without my privitie: and when all things are past and done, I am no more sollicitous concerning them. My business is to attend that that is present, and incumbent upon me. That I thus suffer, it is not for my piety, but for evil, sin, and propriety; because I descend from *Adam*, over all whom, judgment, and death is impending, without hope of recovery. For whatsoever *Adam* hath, he hath it unjustly, he is therefore to be spoiled of all things, that he may want all things, and retain nothing, neither comfort, nor pleasure, nor joy, either as to God, or as to the creature: for nothing is due unto him, nothing belongs unto him: he also himself can never attain unto any truth, but he is condemned, and dyeth in Christ. But whatsoever afterwards riseth again in Christ, is clean, and without appropriation; That Christ hath condemned sin it self, is not to be understood, as if he had sin in himself,

or he is pure, like the sun, void of all impurity. Whence it is, that no unrighteousness can stand before him, but as filthiness, it is condemned by him: just as in the Sun all impurity is detected, and demonstrated to be impurity: So that the sun cannot endure it, but rather destroyeth it. So Jesus Christ is the Sun of righteousness, who by his own proper light, virtue, and pulchritude, condemneth all injustice and unrighteousness, and suffers no darkness to stand before him.

I lie like the trunk, of a tree, nor have I in me any activity, but I suffer only all that, that is done in me: but I cannot act either by reason, or by understanding: My state is passive, not active: the active went before, and I also once had it, so as also it ought to be, or else I had not come unto this. Only it is not permitted to me, that I may or can act, or form in my self the image of any thing.

We must suffer, even in the smallest matters: for he that refuseth that, cannot be promoted in God: by the suggestions

gestions of the Spirit, the suggestions of Nature are to be denyed : that satisfaction may be given to the Spirit ; no man ought to follow Nature, that so the will of God may be done, and not ours. The affliction and misery of Nature, is to be sustained for the sake of God, and the peace of conscience. *It is better, saith Solomon, to be invited unto green herbs with Love, then to a fatted calf with hatred.* Poverty of nature, with peace of conscience is better, then the delight of Nature with anguish of conscience. Necessaries are due unto Nature, that by their means, a man may be converted unto God, but not on the contrary. When the conscience is satisfied, many sorrows do invade nature : But *Peter* commands, that sorrows are to be born for conscience sake, viz. Sorrows that are against Nature, for conscience sake, but not the contrary.

When it was Summer season to my Nature, the heat thereof did stay me, but now Winter is followed thereupon, yet the Summer is still adjudged by me to be excellent and worthy, yea even when

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it's Winter time; but the will of God is more precious to me, then all things. My business or labour is increased and aggravated, yet am I contented: I keep my sorrows in silence: for if they should burst out, and be made publick, clamours, and complainings would dayly be heard from me, because judgment is alwayes exercised upon me, without consolation, nor can I have either delight, or joy, or life either in God, or in the creatures. At the beginning, for some time, I enjoyed comfort, when it was propounded to me, that I was no longer my own, and my goods were no longer mine, but his, with whom I should be married. These endured for a while; but they quickly vanished away again. And from that very time to this, I have been without comfort, nor can I fet my self to read in this condition, seeing it is not lawful for me to assume so many images: Nevertheless I esteem of the Scripture at a high rate, for it is dear and precious to me. Just as he who takes not a thing into his mouth, cannot be sensible of the tast thereof, so also can no man understand, know, or comprehend this

this state, unless he himself does experience it, and come up thereinto. The event or success of things is plainly another thing, then we thought of, without the wisdom, and beyond the understanding reason, or judgment of man. They who are in this state, are not admitted to reason. When others admit comfort, these refuse all consolation: For whatsoever can be said, that they know: And yet even from thence, they can have no comfort.

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## CHAP. XXIII.

**H**E that desires to overcome his hard temptations or trials, it stands him in hand to be calm or quiet; to speak little, and to pray much. It is necessary for me to submit my self to be under men, yea the most foolish, yea also under such as live in errours, and those of the worser sort, I say, I must be submitted unto them all. If they sit upon the bench, I will lye under it, nor will I esteem my self to be better then they. For who am I, that I am not such a one my self? But

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that

that the power of God hath turned me therefrom and so kept me therein, for the sake of which, the glory is not mine, but God's. If I sometimes, out of urgent necessity, speak of them (*viz. David George, and Henry Nicholas*) in truth I do it with fear and trembling, and not with pleasure. I neither may nor can assent to their opinions, for they are depraved, and mightily lead aside, inasmuch as they are fallen into a false liberty. Their fall is most dangerous, and most terrible: for no man can come at them to reprove them, so as to touch their conscience: because nothing touches them, and they esteem and deride all, as if they were childish trifles. But if they were to be reached, there would be need of a more sublime spirit. We must beware, that we fall not back again into that, which we have once forsaken, and left by continence: yea we must have a care, that, if we have proceeded forwards, we slip not back again, and if we have gained any thing, let us not lose it again, for it was gotten with great hardship or difficulty.

God acts thus with a man, that how much soever a man hath profited, yet is not the glory his, but God's only, to whom also it is deservedly to be attributed, as unto whom it only belongs: But man is to be kept under in humility, and his person to be excluded, and God alone to be glorified, to whom alone all glory is due.

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## CHAP. XXIV.

**T**He most ready and next way to proficiency is this, that a man should closely, and diligently observe whatever pleaseth, tempteth, or moveth his carnal appetite, and deny them all: By so doing a man sometimes becomes so overwhelmed with misery, that he knows not which way to turn himself, whence it is, that he is driven to his prayers.

If any one is willing to have all things done so accurately and according to his own mind he must, on that score, suffer so many plagues, and for the sake of one commodity, to indure two incommodities in the stead thereof. A man ought

ought to learn to bear, and suffer whatever is contrary unto himself, else he can never come to rest and peace. *Tauler* saith, Abstain, and Sustain, hold thy tongue, and hold thy peace: Patience only leadeth me into the still rest: Patience is the food of the Soul. Yea in time of pure necessity, Patience is that bread of heaven, and that fulness or plenty kept secret in the Treasure of God. Silence and patience quiet a man. To have no delight neither in God, nor in the creatures, but to perish on both sides, is the most miserable, and desolate of all conditions: If then thou askest; is there therefore no hope left for thee? I answer, thy case is now the very same, as if a grain of wheat, that at this time lyes in corruption, should ask; whither or no there is any hope for it? For if there could be any hope in and to corruption, there would be no need, that the thing should be corrupted; and he that hath hope, hath no need, that he should die. In this death and annihilation the affliction is so great that a man knows not what he is to do: for which way soever he turns himself, he finds life, delight, or quiet

no where, there meets him nothing but corruption, and death, and he himself acknowledgeth that this case is deservedly his, so that he cannot so much as ask that these things may be removed from him: he therefore does nothing, but bows himself down, and shrinketh, saying, O Lord, O Lord! And that conversation he once had with God, with faith, fervor, labour, zeal, and severity, doth plainly go down with him into the grave, and he no longer hath any thing, but lyes in the pit, in death, and annihilation, and suffers the will of God: and whatever he utters in words, concerning these things, he doth it all with grief, and not with pleasure, and when he speaketh, he is involved in greater streights, and difficulties; so that he had rather hold his tongue. Such then as can yet, with delight, and freedom, talk of these matters, by this very talking, do they demonstrate, that they are not yet come unto this state or condition, or unto this exercise, because delight, and pleasure is still alive in them, and they are yet full of corrupt desires, and appetites. And al-

although they are drawn off from the lowest dreggs yet are they turned quite to the other extreme. But yet such are not to be reputed to be like the men, they were before: For now they are honest, whenas formerly they were dishonest, and now they are become more averſe from themſelves, then they were before. Yet although they are now, in part made more noble, and more pure, yet for all that, there muſt come a death, even upon theſe good qualities, becauſe concupiſcence is ſtill preſent, and the objects are only changed, and become more noble. And this is that ſame ſtate, and condition, which goes before that ſame death, corruption, and the grave, and muſt be brought to paſs, and no man can arrive thereat, unleſs it be given to him of God: for from him flows the helps and aſſiſtance, and that accompanied with the deſertion, and renunciation of all things, viſible and inferior, by means of many afflictions. This is that ſtate, to know Chriſt according to the fleſh, in which all things are to be left, before we come to the other deſer-  
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tion, where Chirst appeareth and is acknowledged or known in spirit, nor doth he ever appear, as he did in the former or foregoing itate. To observe order in all things, and to be exorbitant in nothing, keeps the mind free: but when it is otherwise, there arise burdens, and cares: nor is there any liberty allowed for profitable exercises, because of the great heap of confusions, that hinder the man. Whoever therefore would be freed from all pernicious imaginations, he ought to beware, that when he erred upon one hand, being turned therefrom, that he err not also on the other: for a burden awaiteth upon him on either side, wherefore we must pray unto God, to direct our external affairs, into a middle way, for that middle is between both extremes, good: Now this is said concerning things necessary outwardly, but not of things internal, unless it be so far as externals have a respect to internals, and are serviceable unto them; and if they be rightly ordered, do promote them: for when they are disorderly, they became an impediment to internal concerns, and do

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disturb the man making him restless. Whereas if these things be performed with a turning unto God in fear, and in thanksgiving, then is it from God, and it is right, and the man is well enough, but else affliction waiteth on the flesh.

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## CHAP. XXV.

**W**Hatsoever hath received life, ought to dye. *Paul* saith: *If ye live according to the flesh, ye shall dye:* in what thing soever a man placeth his life, according to the flesh, in that very thing also he taketh his death, therefore he ought to beware, so as that he place his life in none of those things in which there is no life. Just so bitter is the difficulty of dying, as was the life formerly sweet. It is therefore necessary, that a man put always a curb upon himself, and that he keeps himself in prison, as it were, least he any ways strayeth, and that he should bound himself within narrow limits, and that he be in constant expectation of the Lord. For the Lord cometh not, but with streights and pressures,

sures for in such, it is that the advancement and growth of a man consisteth, otherwise he is stunted. In the cross alone, conversion and faith in Christ, is given; and there it is that we have or hear our answer. All fruit grows out of pressure, affliction, and misery, which is every where presented, by things visible. Let every one therefore become subject to the cross, and let him not flee from it, at all, God knoweth the conclusion of every thing, and prepareth its end, how compassionately also doth he deal with us. No man ever perished, but he that did flee from the cross, nor was willing to suffer outwardly, and inwardly too. Let not a man be perverse, proud, and lifted up, nor let him speak ambitious words: but let him be humble, simple, and lowly, and let him possess his mind in holiness, and in contrition, and let that appear in all his doings, in all his apparel, manners, words, and works, nor let him ever shew himself proud and puffed up, nor having together therewith, the contempt of his neighbour.

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## CHAP. XXVI.

**T**Rue Godliness suffers vehement trials and temptations through all degrees, or steps whatsoever. He therefore that endeavours to be pious in God, he must yield himself up to affliction, and must not refuse death, nor any pains, or dolours: Blessed is the man that endureth his tryal, &c. We must either confess, or deny Christ, in the time of affliction, and necessity: and if then we do not deny Christ, but stay with, and near him, and firmly keep our standing, that temptation bringeth great increase, and profit to us; and our vertue is enlarged, and strengthened; so that we shall be enabled to stand upright also, in a greater temptation, and to confess Christ therein. The Psalmist saith: *They shall go from virtue to virtue, or from strength to strength, and the God of Gods shall be seen in Zion.* God doth grant his gifts to man, yet not without trying him, either before, or after: Wherefore it is written, *Prepare thee for the trial, and bear patiently.* The Lord saith:

saith: *Ye are they who have persevered in my temptation, and I, &c.* Again: *He that overcometh even as I overcame, shall be heir of all.* Man therefore ought to reduce his life, to become a meer combat. Job saith: *What is man, that thou magnifiest him, or why settest thou thy heart upon him?* When our Lord teacheth his disciples to pray: *Lead us not into temptation,* he does not mean that they should not be tried, but that they should not be overcome in the temptation, or tryal, but that they should remain constant: Therefore to this purpose belong Watchings, Fastings, and Prayers, as he himself saith: *Watch and Pray, lest ye fall into temptation.* These words he said unto his disciples, when he arose from prayer, in that most remarkable temptation. So they ( in 2. Chron. 20. ) also called upon God, in the time of battle, and he was intreated of them, for they trusted in him: Shall not therefore our God judge them? true indeed there is no such courage, and strength in us, that we are able to resist a multitude, which rusheth in upon us; but when we know not what we ought to do, we have

have only this refuge left, to direct our eyes unto thee. *Hearken all ye of Judah, and those that inhabit Jerusalem, Thus saith the Lord: Be not ye afraid, nor tremble at this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but the Lords, do you only stand still, and ye shall see the salvation of God on your behalfs: Trust ye in the Lord your God, and you shall be safe: Believe his Prophets, and all shall happen well. As Jehosaphat gave counsel, the children of Judah were made strong, for they trusted in the Lord the God of their fathers; Help us O Lord our God, for in thee do we put our trust.*

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## CHAP. XXVII.

**A** Man in affliction ought to abstain from all delights of the creatures: nor ought he to seek for a comforter (amongst them) but place all in the Lord: Let him abide without comfort, without complaint, till the Lord cometh. Yea also let him reject all strange wayes of escape, and such like evasions, and let him wait for the Lord: for the Lord will ap-

approve himself faithful to him, and will suffer him to bear but in a just measure, and order, and that to his own glory, and for the promotion and growth of the man. All which, would a man hinder, if being impatient under the cross, he should not wait upon God. Great is the fruit of affliction and therefore in it, is the Lord to be expected. I expected the Lord from the morning watch, even until the evening, saith the *Psalmist*, and *Isaiah* saith: *Blessed are all they that wait upon the Lord, for they that wait upon him shall never be confounded*; the *Psalmist* saith, *In waiting I waited upon the Lord and he regarded me*. Now if there were neither faithfulness nor good will in the Lord, of visiting and helping his, the Scripture would never have represented these things to us, in as much as it speaketh nothing but what is true. The Lord grant us Faith! *Paul* saith: *I believe all the things which are written in the Law and the Prophets*. The eye of our opinion, Love, and favour, is to be turned upon God, and in all things we ought to set him for our mark, and end, and not things

things created; if we would continue pure, and unburthened. The natural state, by the fall of *Adam*, is this, that we should turn our eyes upon those things from whence springs up to us, nothing but blindness, and ignorance: which things also are again changed in a true change which tends to their original: but that then happeneth, with grief, and with anguish. Now he that casts himself into that original, he arrives at the port of grace; and that is revealed to him, which he, before, knew not: for the imitation of Christ openeth and revealeth, but the imitation of the flesh hideth and shutteth.

In all things we are perverse, until we come unto judgment, and death: Unless the Lord should exhibit himself unto us, and should sustain us, by his power, we should all utterly perish: whence we ought deservedly to beware of all rashness.

There is no need that a man should be more solicitous about the getting of knowledge, then he should be of attaining of death: for in death, things do open,

pen, and give out themselves, and true knowledge is unfolded; whereas if life should remain that could not be effected, though a man should strive with never so much study and labour. Yea though he might get knowledge according to the letter, yet for all that, all things are still shut up, and hidden from him, before he can yield himself up into death, and admit in himself the dying of the guilty body, such studyings, and endeavours after knowledge, are rather an hinderance, because thereby a man neglecteth his own self, and becomes forgetful of his own concerns. Of this also saith our Lord: *What shall it profit a man to gain the whole World, and to lose his own Soul.*

That any one in this world should not be solicitous nor feed carking care, many things are requisit, for there are some who take no care at all; because they labour not by reason of want, or penury: And many are such by nature. Yet this is not that which our Lord saith: For the words of our Lord always point at some other thing, then what we derive from  
*Adam,*

*Adam*, yea they are spoken quite contrary to that, which we are in *Adam*. Therefore our Lord is very odious to the flesh, yea the very death, and destruction thereof is Christ, who proceeds quite contrary to our Nature.

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## CHAP. XXVIII.

**N**Ecessary affairs are done, and performed by the chosen of God, without the cleaving or sticking of their hearts unto them: And if it be not thus, but that the heart is rather burdened with them, and is involved in imaginations, this is not thorough any fault in the things, but because of that defect, that still abideth in man. And thus a man goes away blinded, not knowing himself, until he falleth into temptation or tryal. But when he comes to a feeling knowledge of himself, then he may be advanced; which could never be done afore; because he had to do with sin secretly. That which a man sometimes thought was hurtful to him, and his hinderance, that afterwards serves to advance, and put him

him forwards: Therefore should a man remain without any choice of his own, but wait what God will do with him, and thus yield himself up, as being bowed under the divine will.

Here is the communion of Saints, and that in the highest degree; Let therefore the lowest degree blush that even it also doth not earnestly long after this communion: for if the Sun gives himself forth in common, certainly then the Moon ought to do the like, who else ought to be ashamed, if she should claim to herself too great a propriety, and arrogate all to be hers. He who is swallowed up by created things, feels from them either a pleasure, or a pain, even to joy, or grief; so as he can have no peace: But he who is free from them, is free also from both those evils, so that neither what is pleasant, neither what is ungrateful, neither gladness, nor sorrow reacheth him. And because joy hath no place in him, neither also doth sorrow touch him, if things do happen other ways, then joy and desire do expect and ask. To stand between comfort and discomfort, be-

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tween joy and grief, and to remain untouched, and unmoved by either, is a great liberty, and the gift of God, for no man hath that of or from himself: Yea let no man unduely think that he hath gotten that, for many things are required before we can arrive at this state or condition; and when we are come thither, yet is not glory thereof belonging to man, but to God alone. And thus man is to abide in humility without judging, or contemning of others.

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## CHAP. XXIX.

**S**In is hated in a double sense, and that by divers sorts of persons. For some do hate sin, because of affliction: they thereby being afflicted, and terrified in their consciences, as also because of the loss they sustain by it, as the loss of their souls, of heaven, and of eternal salvation; and if these two were not, viz. the torment of conscience, and the loss of heaven, they could love sin, and be friends with it, yea become to be united and to be in league therewith. And

it is thus proved, because that same hatred of sin, proceeds not from the nature of the mind nor from regeneration; in as much as there is, in this state, still left the old life, to which belongeth judgment, and condemnation, and is that that must dye the death. Whereas others, *viz.* such as are transplanted into God, do hate sin, out of the Nature of their mindes, and out of regeneration. For the new life which is in them, will not bear sin, nor suffer it to be: and that not because of that torment of conscience, or loss of salvation, but out of its own nature, by reason of its tenderness, and its holy temper. For this nature can endure nothing that is strange, for it is the New-man Christ Jesus, who is God himself. Hence is it that these two Sorts do thus differ one from another: The first is, when some are the enemies of sin for their own sakes, when as, by nature, they are still friends. But the other, and second sort is, when it hath lost (itself or) propriety, and hateth sin by nature, for such are in God, and, being new creatures, have attained a new sense,

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which is spiritual: Whereas the former sort, is still natural, and hath a natural sense; whence they wear about them, not the new, but the old creature. Yet they are well enough in their own kind, and their state, or condition precedeth the latter, or second, and waites for it. The Lord be merciful to us: For this last state is not the result of our studyes, and endeavours, but of the grace of God: a man comes thereunto not actively, but passively, and it behooveth that God only be the work-master therein. *Tauler* saith: *Keep thy self passive, and God will be active, and then the thing will not be impossible;* because God himself will do it, and transfer a man to that one scope, or end, viz. God himself; and all this, by and thorough Christ Jesus our Lord, who being just, suffered for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God: and that is it which is promised in the Prophets, *that the Lord would prepare such a people, as should declare his praise, which is written in Luke I. 71.* Salvation from our enemies: And that which *Paul* saith: *I condemn sin thorough sin: it is a great bitterness*

terness to me ; yet it is a sword that pierceth into my breast. No man can know what it is, unless he have layn in it. But to all the rest, who yet stand in the labour of the Law, those sayings are as sweet as hony, but to me bitter : but when they also shall have come thus far, the same thing will happen also to them. Oh grief ! that I must draw my Salvation from out of my enemies, and experimentally feel, that sin shall be condemned thorough sin.

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### CHAP. XXX.

**I**F we ever are willing to become proficient, we must bear one with another, as God also hath born with us, and still beares with us, and even as others also do bear with us. Yet it is chiefly to be endeavoured, that we dayly become less and less troublesome unto others, and being accepted of God, we should have soundness of conscience. We ought to be brethren, and not accuse, diffame, or contemn one another for any shame or spot. And if any one cannot do, or

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have this from the very foundation, yet he ought to suppress these things in himself, and to have a care least they break forth again: and then will the conscience be endued with no bitterness, and the state of the man will be well.

We ought not to be troublesome to one another in gestures, or words, or works, or thoughts, but every where to seek peace in love. And because now its told us concerning affliction, that we must be subjected thereunto, in what manner soever it rusheth in upon us, it is to be accepted as from the hand of God; and a man in affliction, ought to abstain from all delights derived from the creatures. We must begin to cut off our members, before we come at the heart. Sin must be starved to death, and as it is usual to deal with a feaver; neither food is to be given to it, and wherever it would put forth it self, it is to be hindred from growing. Yea also its life, which is so strongly manifested in us, is by the help of conscience, to be suppressed, until it come to its death. If any one would seriously possess these things, let him day-ly

ly call upon God, that he would be present with him in them. When he (the Author) was sometimes asked, what was to be done with those persons, who persecuted others for the sake of Faith? answered, that we ought to love, even our persecutors, and added this similitude: If any one by great and dayly travail, desired to go to *Cologne* by a journey or way very difficult, and troublesome, and some body should, by chance, come and put this traveller into a Coach, and so carry him to *Cologne*, certainly to such a one he ought to return the greatest thanks, but not hatred.

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## CHAP. XXXI.

*Concerning the exercise of Prayer.*

**T**He Author being asked concerning prayers, answered: I every day appear thrice before the Lord in prayer. Being asked, whither by the voice of his mouth? He answered Yes, viz. in the Morning, at Noon, and at Night. Being asked, whither he did so, by reason of all those sins, which pressed him

down, with the heaviest care, or anxiety, and which were in him most displeasing to God? He answered, Yes. But said he, such representations were always set before my eyes, that I might appear pure, and that did keep me from sinning. Moreover I always had my mind lifted up to God in my labour, that I might diligently observe the very bottom of my heart, nor would I let my hands be free from labour. If I had wandred, or erred any where, or had done any thing, that I knew to be unjust, I was not heard, but rejected of the Lord. Therefore I was still endeavouring, that I might always appear purer and purer, if I intended to be heard of the Lord. It is necessary that a man should exceeding seriously, and diligently exercise himself in prayer, if he intends to be advanced in the Lord: For *Paul saith: That man ought to pray in every place lifting up pure hands, without wrath, and contention: viz.* least that our consciences should accuse us, or our cogitations, excuse themselves, and thereupon become angry and contend in us. Prepare thyself first, before thou prayest, nor

nor go about it like one that is about to tempt God. We ought with fear, and terroure, yea with great trembling appear before God in prayer, and therefore we ought to be prepared, before we pray. Poverty and affliction teach us to pray. By how much greater the affliction is, by so much the more peircing will the prayer be.

We are to endeavour not to seem, or profess our selves otherwise before men, then we profess our selves before God: For men before men, seem to be somewhat, when yet before God, they be still as a nothing in the bottom: and consequently they deceive themselves.

## CHAP. XXXII.

**A** Man ought not openly to reveal his divine exercise, viz. that, by which he is exercised by God. Some are naturally so close of heart, that they are willingly silent, and reveal to no man their divine exercise: that is the gift of God, and is pleasing to God. Others are naturally open of heart, so as they

willingly discover, to any one, their di-  
 vine exercises, and their whole mind,  
 and that is very displeasing to God. Such  
 therefore are to endeavour and study, to  
 get close hearts, and let them learn to  
 bridle their tongues, and beg help from  
 the Lord. For no man can readily  
 come to be silent, unless first he be deep-  
 ly smitten in his heart, with most bitter  
 affliction, so as his heart becometh as it  
 were ground to powder. For he that is  
 not yet come to this poverty, but is still  
 rich, cannot hold his tongue. He that  
 handleth himself severely, that he may  
 break his nature, and becometh harsh to  
 his own self, can difficultly compassion-  
 ate others, whom he seeth not to be as  
 severe as he is himself: and therefore he  
 so driveth others, that they may be like  
 him in state, or condition, and he is un-  
 merciful, nor also can he be silent (al-  
 though sometimes he hath his conscience  
 pressed down with solicitous care) be-  
 cause his heart is not yet pierced quite  
 thorough, nor is digged down to its very  
 bottom, nor utterly broken with bitter  
 affliction: but he that hath his heart  
 ground

ground to power, and deeply wounded with great, and bitter misery, he can hold his tongue, yea he chooseth rather to be silent (although sometimes necessity should require it otherwise) then to speak, unless God shall compel him thereunto. For such a one cannot so readily convert himself towards outward things, but what things soever are in such a man, are turned to the affliction of his heart, and all things are filled with sorrow.

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### CHAP. XXXIII.

**I** Never found so clear an understanding, nor so great experience as in grief, sorrow, misery, affliction, and in the death, and destruction of the flesh. That time which is spent in the cross, pain, grief, misery, and streights, is gained: but that which is spent in pleasure, joy, delights, and plays, is lost.

The mind of a man, that is still floating up and down, and can still be moved at things pleasant, or painful, or in joy, or in grief, doth not yet belong unto God, for in God there is no mutation, be-

because he is unchangeable: Now when the mind of Man cannot be moved by the aforesaid things, then is God present in that Soul, and it is he who worketh that in the man. Those six gifts of the holy Spirit must first be accomplished, then at length followeth that seventh gift, *viz.* the spirit of fear of the Lord, which puts a man into a sweet calm, because this spirit of fear, preserveth all the former gifts, that they may remain pure; and then it is that a man is, in all respect, struck with a great fear and trembling, that he may rightly use them, and keep them pure; it is this last gift of the fear of God, that keeps steady in all things, that man that hath recieved it. We are therefore earnestly to endeavour to act rightly in all concerns, and to walk before God with holy fear. Our conscience is our book, into which we ought every day to look, and in which, to diligently, and seriously read, and study, that we may most exactly perform, that which it witnesseth. Conscience is a thousand witnesses, about which the old, and new Testament is our rule of direction.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXXIV.

**T**His year proved more difficult, or hard to me, then it was ever before in all my life, and yet I did most accurately weigh, and ponder on that same time. For by how much the more sublime, any one ascendeth in affliction, by so much the more accurately doth he weigh and count his time, and it proves thereby more profitable to him. All the foregoing time of mine, which I had spent before this year, vanished away, and came to nothing, even as this my present time also shall vapour away into nothing: because my body is annihilated. I have no support, hence is it, that times becomes so tedious to me; but when time is spent in labour, it produceth no difficulty. But when I am deprived of all my strength, I can neither pray, nor desire, nor lift up one thought to God; Yea here I lye, and corrupt in body, mind, and spirit, as long as breath remaineth in me: Yea as to my understanding also, and my reason, I am reduced to nothing

thing. As for my understanding, I know nothing of it, whither, *viz.* I have an understanding or not, for in this great gulfe of misery, all things are reduced to dust, and ashes. Here I lye, and am sensible of nothing, but judgment, death, and condemnation. And when one said to him, is it so, that when thou art accused, presently judgment is at hand? he answered, Am I accused? ( not as though I were so perfect, as that I could not be accused ) but if it were possible for me to take up life in such a moment of time, as that accusation might assault me in, even in that very moment should I be blown into meer atoms. But I have not so much time left me, because as many moments of my life as yet remain, so many judgments, and deaths do I suffer. I lye as it were in a thick dark cloud, and see nothing; oh how very small, weak, and dim is that poor ray of light, that is round about me! I cannot see far before me, yea neither doth my way, and path appear to my sight; yea I am lead on where no way is, and that which is life to another, that is death to me, and con-

contrarily, that which is anothers death is my life. Judgment is so sharp to me, as it is when one, not thinking any thing, layes his hand upon some place, and presently some body knocks him on the fingers. When any would reply upon him, that this case was a certain kind of preservation from God, becaule he laid his hand so faithfully upon thee: he still answered; True indeed this condition is the most safe before the eyes of God, but the most afflicted one in my sight. For if I should acknowledge this state to be safe, forthwith another judgment is to be undergone by me. For plainly, I am lead without knowledge, without being acquainted, or understanding the way. For he who hath experienced the thing its self, and he that hath been lead in this way, only notionally, are vastly differing, because true knowledge and understanding, is such a life, such a prop, that a man comes then only to know them when God withdraws them from him. Just as when one laboureth with great thirst, and sees a pot stand before him, yet for all that, his thirst cannot but afflict him  
still

still : but then if there should come one who should take the pot quite away, then remaineth no hopes of ever attaining to drink thereof. All the Elect are brought unto God thorough affliction, but all do not tread this same path of the cross, by which I am to pass.

### CHAP. XXXV.

**A**Ll things are transformed, and changed, whence I observe, that, ere long, many wonderful things will happen, and the strange things of God will spring forth. I indeed have desired to see them, but I shall not arrive at them, for I see my end before my eyes, yet I rejoyce, because of the time to come, which now is ready at the door, and I rejoyce concerning that time, when I look upon children. Remember me, my mind presageth ( not as if all I say were Gospel ) it will be, that the glory and the knowledge of God will more abundantly break forth hereafter. But I must possess my end, and departure hence, and that is now at hand, yet nevertheless, I stand in the communion of those forespoken  
 of. God

God is a perfect and a pure God, with whom that one may be united, many things are requisite. And therefore we must not cry out too plainly, although we hear, and see many great matters in a certain Man, for all as yet may have an ill conclusion. This I say for this end, that we should always abide in fear.

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## CHAP. XXXVI.

*Containing the last Exhortation of Matthew Wyer, and his Departure out of this life.*

**A**Nd now I shall bid you farewell, for perhaps it is determined, that I may speak no more. I will recommend myself to the Lord. See that ye labour and walk in all conscience, before God: Love your brothers, and sisters, as your own selves, and take care of them, otherwise judgment will come upon you. This you must do, that when you shall lye, as I now lye, ye may lye with a quiet heart. Behave your selves in all things uprightly, and seek after the salvation of  
your

your Souls: for salvation is of greater price  
 then mony, or all goods. Mony, with  
 its goods perish together, but salvation  
 brings peace to the heart of Man.  
 Let me depart from you in freedom:  
 from my death ( as I hope ) a living  
 motion will spring up in you. I recom-  
 mend you to the Lord, who can freely  
 bestow on you wisdom, and understand-  
 ing, and all other necessities in a hun-  
 dred fold. The Lord will presently give  
 me rest, I expect, and wait for eternal  
 rest. I am to suffer so long as the Lord  
 will have me. If I had known this affli-  
 ction before now, I should have dyed  
 for meer grief. O inward desertion!  
 O desolation ( *Wisdom 1.* ) which now  
 stands ready at hand! I desire to be the  
 most vile of all, and only long for the  
 crumbs which fall from the childrens table.  
 If I could have avoided this affliction yet  
 I would not, for my conscience hath  
 bound me to abide by it. Misery, in af-  
 fliction, is great: a man would willing-  
 ly be lead with certainty, but yet is he  
 lead with uncertianty, and it is, as if one  
 should journey by night, and yet not  
 know

know the way; when ( besides ) the waters are out, he may chance to fall, and yet he must go forwards. Yet is he secretly lead by God, and when the morning arises, he shall see, that the business hath succeeded well enough. In affliction nothing is known, how that a man is sustained, and taken care of, but at last it is acknowledged, and then it is known, that God was always present, even in his desertion. The highest affliction doth manifest, that selfishness, or propriety which yet was before undiscerned: and God prepareth a man for this highest of afflictions. All things are snatched from me, even before my face, yet I know what I am to do; I will beg of God a favourable death for my self. O Lord behold thy miserable creature. O Lord imbrace me, for all things are from thee. O Lord imbrace all my powers, and strength, and grant strength unto me, in this my deepest misery: Here I ly before thee like a most wretched worm: All the affliction which I have hitherto suffered, is nothing to this misery.

Having

Having finished these words, and commending his spirit into the hands of God, he fell asleep in the Lord by a pleasant and easy departure on the 25th April in the year 1560, about the 4th hour in the morning, at *Wesel*, in the year of his age 39.

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*Here end the Sayings.*

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THE  
EPISTLES  
OF  
M. Wyer,

Which he sent to his  
Familiar FRIENDS.

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WRITTEN

By the Author in the *Low-  
Dutch*, and published after  
his Death. Being afterwards  
turned into *Latin*, and out  
of the *Latin* now at last in-  
to the *English* Tongue.

---

L O N D O N,

Printed for Benj. Clark in George-Yard in  
Lombard-street, 1683.

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TO THE  
**READER.**

A brief Narrative concerning  
 the Original of this small  
 Treatise.

READER,

**W**Ho art a Christian in good earnest  
 before I shall begin to relate any  
 thing of this little tract, or of it's original  
 or subject, I am willing faithfully to ex-  
 hort thee as also most earnestly to beseech  
 thee, that thou diligently callst upon God  
 for illumination, and for the opening of the  
 Eyes of thy understanding, whereby thou  
 mayest be enabled according to his good plea-  
 sure, rightly to understand, that which is  
 here proposed, which being by the grace of  
 God performed, thou shalt in very deed ex-  
 perience,

perience, that this book will be very useful and profitable unto thee, seeing it is every where filled with the most excellent and choice expressions, which are able to lead thee unto the true judgment of many points. Nor does it only bring most notable advantage to thee only, but also to all the Elect, who duly, and according to true knowledg, have a zeal for God, but to such as are perverse, and behold all things with perverse and blind Eyes, these things will without doubt, seem to be full of dulness, and foolishness. O that our eyes were single, then certainly we should easily perceive that these Epistles and sayings have not flowed from humane wisdom, nor through the dead letter (as to the more divine senses) nor from the outward bark only, but from the instinct of the holy Spirit, and that he who wrote, and spoke these, to have been, indeed, a man divinely illuminated, and a very intimate friend of God, and that he learnt and drew these truths out from the book of his cross, and by the means of his inward Sorrows in the School of Christ.

But let us make our approach nearer, to the thing intended, and that we may pre-  
face

face a few things concerning the original of this small treatise, let the hearty Reader know, that the aforesaid-friend of God, wrote these Epistles to his familiars, and friends, seperated from his dwelling, in divers places; to every one according to his condition, to stir up their zeale, by no other means, then the study of simplicity: with no intention to have them afterwards printed, and published, insomuch as that, after his death they being by some honest hearted searchers, collected together, were thus put together into one Volume. But those sayings of his, he himself wrote not, but only uttered them orally. And this was his faithful counsel, that every one ought to seek the thing there, where he himself had sought, and found it, and in which place only it can be found and gotten, viz. In God, the ever springing fountain of all wisdom, and goodness, and from whom flow these living streams; neither may any one (who is not willing to be deceived) draw them from strange muddy Cisterns or Lakes.

Now by what means those his sayings were ( he not knowing it ) taken from his mouth, and

and comprehended in one volume, we shall briefly declare.

This most religious Matthew (amongst those of his family) bred up an honest young man, whose name was John Spee, filled with an earnest fervor, and Zeale for the divine glory. This person was daily with him, so that, as there was occasion, he heard his speeches with his friends, and familiars, that came from several places to visit him; as also such discourses as he frequently had with himself. All therefore what ever he had heard, being well imprinted upon his mind, and memory, when the discourse was ended, he in his own chamber, faithfully committed it to writing: nor did he in the least acquaint any one with them, even to his last breath. But then, when he was about to die, he discovered to his friends, who stood by, that he had privily committed those sayings to writing, as they would find them amongst his written-papers. Now why that treatise of his sayings was divided into three parts, the reason was, because the aforesaid John Spee, by reason of his own private affairs, went away twice, and consequently

O

had

had ordered, according to each space of time, a part distinct by it self even as they were afterwards kept, divided, and are here printed. But the distinction or distribution into Chapters and Verses was done by another, for the Readers sake, that by the guidance of a Table, every particular point might be the more conveniently inquired after, and be found out.

Moreover, as to the forementioned John Spec. This may be said of him: He was an unmarried Young Man, descended of a Noble Family, very pious, and having a manifest warmth and Zeale. This man seeing he was blessed of the Lord, with the true knowledge of the most holy Gospel, having bid adieu to the world, dayly studied and searched into the Holy Scriptures, being, with all his might, intent thereon, so that he might but arrive at the true knowledge of himself. And when he saw that youthful lusts, according to the flesh, did strive to get dominion over his soul, and upon all sides, rushed in upon him, he began to exercise himself with all his utmost endeavours, in watchings, and fastings dayly, and both night and day, tiring himself

out with prayers; that he might resist those invading lusts, and cast a bridle over them. And when he observed, that sin did not yet cease from his Soul, and mind, he entred into a more hard, or strict course of life, with all severity, which he continued even to his death, outliving the most pious Matthew eleven Months only, for he then died, and was carried into the true rest from all his labours on the second of March 1561. May our merciful Lord and God, grant to us all, his compassion, and graciously help us that we may in his good time be set free from all our erroneous waies, and thoughts, and from all our faults and blemishes. Amen.

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## EPISTLES

OF

*Mat. Weyer.*

## EPIST. I.

*By what means we may come to the  
clear perception of divine Grace.  
To G. of F.*

**W**Hereas, I certainly find in thee,  
a desire greatly enflamed, and  
that thy soul even burns with a thirsty  
longing after the gaining the most clear  
perception of true divine Grace, manifest-  
ed by Christ our Saviour, I could not rest  
contented, until, taking this matter in  
hand, I should endeavour briefly to shew  
to thee what that is, that can conduct,  
or lead thee thereunto, whereby those  
things

things may be the better discovered to thy sight, which are here a hinderance to thee, so that they being rejected, thou mayest with fear beware of what hides thy light with thick darkness.

For it is impossible, whilst there yet remains but one only ( yea though it be the least ) root of sin in which a man still persists, that he can ever arrive at such a degree of Grace, because at the time that Regeneration is perfected, when by that clear light, above nature, manifested to, and in a man by the holy Spirit, that same enmity, that is interposed between him and God, is represented to him, no iniquity, nor any accusation of conscience ought to be found in him; Yea so pure must that regeneration be, that that man, as far as he is conscious to himself, should have nothing, either in Heaven, or in Earth, which he shall not have already resigned up, so as to be ready with a most ardent zeal, to forsake all things, for the sake of God; Yea, he shall never have need further to sustain even the least check of conscience, but shall have beaten back all by a most invincible perseverance

rance in fighting, and shall have supplanted all whatsoever may disturb his conscience, insomuch, that by these means, his soul may at last arrive to have a conscience in full peace, and void of all accusations.

For often times a man thinks that he is come to the cutting off many wicked inclinations, and that then he is in little or no want, and that chiefly, because that which is the quite contrary, whereby it's possible for him to be corrupted, is not manifestly made known to him, whereas if all that, was a little more clearly manifested to him, he would certainly then, very readily apprehend, that he was yet at a far greater distance from that degree of a more purified conscience.

Seeing therefore this is the condition of man that his unrighteousness and wickedness is greater then he can know, therefore all such things, as fall within his sight, are alwayes to be by him sedulously cut off: for he neither can sooner be able to perceive those sins which are unknown to him, or shall he observe depravities, which were not before understood, but by thus doing. For

so long as a man liveth slothfully in known sins, the sins that are unknown, will not shew themselves: whence it comes to pass, that a man living at this rate, commonly remains in darknes, and the light never comes to shoote forth it's beams manifestly in him. For when he shall have rooted out those sins that daily rack his conscience, there presently will arise in their stead another new accusation of his conscience, which was, till now, unknown to him, seeing that same field of accusations will never be barren even to the last moment of the combate. Wherefore the aforesaid vices are not laid open, even to the very bottom of his nature, unless they shew their faces by degrees, and that even from the very first entrance into the combate, to the very point of time, when the strivings, with the accusing sin, are finished by afflictions, and through the cross; the Soul, at last, gaining her freedome from, and becoming conqueress over them all, in a conscience truly pure, and thoroughly purged, apprehending nothing at all, either within, or without her self ( as far

as it is truly possible for a man, to see, and know after a most exact scrutiny made by the power of God ) which she hath not fully resigned up, and denied herself in. And to declare it in short, upon this very point turns the hinge of the matter, and unto this ought all such, as earnestly endeavour after the attainment of rest, and peace, with their utmost diligence, to reach after it with their whole heart, and to Institute their lives, accordingly thereunto; unless they are willing to try how it will be, to be distracted, and drawn hither, and thither, by a wavering kind of zeale, nor ever to get free from accusations of that sort, and much less to be strengthened by a firm Faith of mind, but to be alwaies vexed, and tormented with anxious thoughts of heart, partly through the so often repeated pangs, and pricks of conscience, inwardly, and partly by the unspeakable hot zeal, of the many contenders, about the truth, outwardly, they become wracked in so miserable a manner, that at the last they grow wholly ignorant which way to take, or turn themselves.

For

For so long as a man is still held captive in himself, by any kind of iniquity whatsoever, and is in the inwards of his soul, privately accused of it, and yet he gives no due heed thereunto, being ignorant, how he may get free therefrom, and studieth and endeavoureth, what he can to defend it, either by scripture-sayings or by some other waies, which still hold him in this error, nor yet is he, for all this, freed from it in his mind ( his conscience all this while freely prompting, and telling him whether he doth well, or ill ) and notwithstanding he endeavoureth to pacifie his conscience, by these, or such like waies, yet he shall find that all this his labour is lost, when he shall see that this same secret accusation, and laying of blame upon him, before his judge, will never give over, or cease.

In this point therefore let every one try himself, and let no man deceive himself, flattering himself with sugred words, for the day will manifest all things, whether we be willing or not, yea all whatever we now gladly hide in

the bottome of our hearts, and yet do deny and disown them.

If therefore we say: I confess my faults: I confess my self to be as miserable, and as perverse a sinful man, as can be found any where; Go to then, let us endeavour, that that for which we are to be accounted Sinners, be taken from us, and that we be turned from all unrighteousness. For the bare confession of sins makes no Man innocent, but the very rooting out of sin. For as long as any Man is accused of any iniquity, or perverse action yet remaining, even so long is it, that he is still in bondage, nor are his Sins forgiven him: it is therefore absolutely necessary, that he should quite extirpate all such, and after the accusation thereof is made in himself, that he execute the sentence, that he may forever die to that unrighteousness: inso-much, as that there be left in him no such purpose of ever doing again, any the like iniquity; so that, all being thus brought under, there may remain nothing covered, or secretly hidden in his Soul, which he shall not wholly desist from.

from, in the true simplicity of his conscience and that he become pure, and wholly cleansed according to the utmost and best of the knowledge of himself in his own breast.

Then at length the Lord in his own time may for this Man's good meet him, as being manifested to him, through some very great temptation, and may force him upon some anxious, and horrible combate; which the poor wretch had not in the least foreseen, nor even then neither, could understand, untill all was past, and finished. Then it is, that he who, before that, seemed to himself, to have arrived at a true innocence of conscience in himself, is set at the bar of divine judgment, and from the opinion of being highly lifted up, or advanced, in so much as he seemed to himself to touch the very Heavens, he is thrown down to the nethermost place of some most deep humiliation, even like Hell it self. Then is he blown upon, and purged by the true fire of divine Judgment, kindled within him; and the enmity that is interposed betwixt God and him, doth dayly

daily decrease through Jesus Christ, who now at last doth begin to perform in him, the proper business of his office, and is about to reduce him, unto the Image of his death, burial, and resurrection, whereby at length he may be brought to the true union of a more divine constitution in Christ, together with the hope of a glory to come, which shall never more be changed, even such as shall be manifested to all, who with their whole heart, and in truth are Lovers of God above all.

Whoever he is that is brought unto this eminent rejection, as also to the acknowledgment of himself, he, as to the inward man, is afflicted with most wonderful streights and difficulties, before he can be arrived there-at, insomuch as he becomes willing to renounce, submit, resign up, yea and to account for, as nothing, all that treasure, he hath scraped together from opinion, and that strange high flown exaltation, yea and all that liberty, which is born together with us in our first natural generation. Which being full effected, at length there

there succeeds the revelation of the glory of Christ, whose likeness he, by little and little, grows sensible of, and which observed thus gradually to increase in him, he catcheth with great earnestness, inasmuch as it presenteth to him wonderful promises.

Now this last state being arrived at, he still becomes more and more averse from all things past; and by how much the more this same aversion increaseth, by so much the more plentifully do things following succeed in the place of the former, inasmuch as at length he becomes quite freed, in due time, from the speech, wisdom, understanding, counsels, and actions, which hitherto he had exercised himself in, as to the creature, and was lead from infancy to perfect manhood, according to the measure of his age in the fulness of Christ.

But now there are some who are fully contented with their own zeal, and think themselves altogether certain, and sure of that reconciliation which is acquired in Christ: Now whether this be truly so or no, shall be, at last, then made manifest, when the secrets of all hearts from

from the very bottom of their Souls shall be laid open thorough him, who searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins, and will render to every one according to the works of his hands. Whereas if whilst they yet enjoy the breath of life, they themselves searching narrowly into their own bosoms, would commit or leave their course to the secret accusation of their hearts, and would not cloak their sins with such or such reasons, or also with some sayings of the Scriptures (misapplied or ill understood and used) then would they fully perceive themselves to be yet far away removed from that reconciliation, that is given by Christ, and would find in themselves nothing but the wrath of God; from which yet they cannot truly get free, unless they can come into Christ and the image of him, and consequently feel sensibly in themselves Reconciliation, Freedom, and Redemption, not without, but within their own selves; and thereof to become perswaded in themselves, not by an undue disorderly reading of the Scriptures, or from some kind of opinion of their own, make themselves

selves more assured, or may expect or receive it from any creature whatsoever, but feelingly, livingly, and internally, being convinced in their own hearts, do truly become sensible of the highest love in the deepest enmity; of the greatest riches, in the extreamest poverty; of the profoundest joy in the most pressing streights, and misery; and in the fiercest combat, the sweetest peace, and (in a word) in the lowest despondencies and weakness, yea desperation and inconstancy, the highest faithfulness and constancy ought to be found in God.

Here Faith comes to be tryed, whether it be of man, or whether it be of God: for if it be of man, it refuseth to choose for it self true poverty of Spirit, together with the abnegation of proper happiness, which it elected for it self; for it denieth to assume for its conservation and happiness, any thing but what is before its own eyes, and is promised in words grossly understood from the Scriptures, and acquiesces in the doing of them only, that the Soul may be saved: but if some things seem to it to be impossible to be performed

ed, it layes all that upon the shoulders of Christ, as without and beyond it self, and so quiets its own conscience in the best manner it can be possibly performed. When as if from the most inward secrets of its own Soul, it would confess the truth, it would indeed tell you of a conscience not soundly pacified, but rather of one that gnaweth and tormenteth, unless it strives of set purpose to hide the true state of the matter.

But if such a one be about to object and say; This is the Devil, that thus accuseth, and blameth a man, in his conscience, from which notwithstanding any one may be freed, by and thorough Christ. Well then! if this is the Devil, that thus accuseth him without any Lie, and yet, by this accusation, keepeth him still captive in his chaines (for he hath not as yet forsaken him) then Christ, dwelling in him also, hath not, as yet, set him thus at liberty from the Devil, Hell, and Sin, that his freedom and reconciliation might be truly found to be in Christ himself; Because for him, for whom Christ dyed, in him also, he ought

torise again, so as Death, Sin, the Devil, and Hell may have no just right over him, yea not so much as to touch him with the least finger, because that he being plainly freed from all these, by Christ dwelling in him, he is become a member of his body, against which can no accusation or condemnation be brought: for even as the head is found blameless in innocency, so also is the whole body, with all its members.

Let every one narrowly prove himself, before he boasteth himself to be a member of this body ; for Christ is not so vile in us, as we may think him to be, nor is the imitation of him so small a thing, that it can be comprehended and known by our gross natural reason. Because as he was supernaturally conceived and born; so in like manner, did he operate, and speak, yea whatever is manifested concerning Christ, ought to be most exactly expressed in us in Spirit and Life, and in divine truth ; therefore he that will glory that he understands, and knows, Christ and is a partaker of him, it behooveth him in the same manner, with Christ.

Christ to be regenerated in Spirit, so that it is no longer he, but Christ who liveth in him. And then indeed no Devil, nor any accusation can touch him; moreover he also will himself judge of all far otherwise, then by the light judgment of a natural man, seeing all the mysteries of the Scripture are to all, that is of Nature left in him, occult and hidden, until the man be transplanted into the likeness of Christ, where not the least room is left for nature; inasmuch as sin is condemned already, as being at enmity, even with God himself.

Thus I have briefly and succinctly laid before thee, those things, which are ordinarily met with, in them who conceive a zeal for God; that thou mayest learn cautiously to proceed in these matters, and that thou be not driven hither and thither by every wind of doctrine, but that thou mayest finish thy combat with a serious and most ardent zeal, until the Lord shall guide thee, at last, unto the regeneration, which is done in Spirit, being frequently invoked by prayers, and sighs, after many adversities

ries, and both inward, and outward sorrows, by which a man is wonderfully put forward towards that which he aims at. The Lord grant to thee his grace, in his own time, that thou mayest at last become joyfully sensible, in the secret of thy heart, of those most excellent helps, and victories, which are attained to thorough the cross, sufferings, and pains.

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## EPIST. II.

*Concerning the most subtil craftiness of Humane Nature.*

*To the same Lady.*

**T**HE Lord multiply unto thee the benediction of internal grace, and the right understanding of his will, inasmuch as his will cannot be acknowledged by nature, left to herself, seeing she is plainly contrary thereunto, although sometimes she may seem to be thoroughly united unto it: for all men do, with open mouths, boast of the knowledge of God, and no man will be wanting in that: every body cries, that he is arrived thereat and that

that he hath fully obtained it (I speak of those who study their own righteousness and give up themselves to God, and trust confidently before God, that they are made free thorough Jesus Christ) when notwithstanding such a man, never yet arrived, in the least, to truly know himself, and hath never as yet, observed the most crafty temptations, and the seducements of his own nature; because he esteemed that for good, which (on the quite contrary) did draw him farthest away from God, and his motions, and comes quite opposit to all those things which God willeth, and desireth.

Here, thou must diligently have a care rightly to understand, the nature, and desires of that propriety (which give me leave to call Tuity or Thiness) which dwells in the flesh, and yet bears before it a certain appearance of some spiritual quality. For all men are lead captive by this enemy, none excepted, though he be the most devout, yea though he may seem to live the life of an Angel, and may bring to light wonderful secrets, yet will he be no less, then the rest, caught, and

and bound in these most subtle fetters. And although some begin to be aware of these snares, yet, for all that, some other, such like trap, is laid more finely, and secretly, which they fall into sometimes, which afterwards, doth afresh terrify them, when as before they seemed to themselves to have obtained illumination, salvation, Yea even God him-  
self.

Now this a man cannot know, unless he be lead thorough them, and tries all in God; for in such a man, these matters cannot be more plainly, or deeply implanted, so as to abide in that presence of God; true indeed, they may partly be comprehended by Nature, but when Nature is withdrawn from us, we are bound stark naked, because these things were not, at the first, owned in spirit before God, who only remains constant, and immutable to all eternity.

For God is a spirit, and he that would know him in truth, and see his brightness, and adore him, it behooveth this man to endeavour after all this, in spirit, and into this state, or condition, it is necessary.

cessary that a man be truly, and properly lead by God, in his own time, year, and that it also is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs: but if so be any one be faithful, in that wherein he standeth, then shall much more be given unto him.

Concerning all these things, thou wilt find most full instruction in those two Treatises intituled the *German Divinity*, and that of the *Imitation of Christ*, the Authors of which have experienced these things in God, and do give, concerning them, a true guidance, and information, which we are to find in our own selves; although they do not put into our hand the very things it self, yet is the world deceived in this very particular, *viz.* that it can account of some certain semblance of a thing, for the very thing it self.

For the flesh, or Nature in us, is never willing to sit down in an inferiour seat, and if it but begins to reject somewhat that is false, yet by and by it leans upon some other such like prop, being confidently perswaded, she is acted by a divine spirit, when indeed all this, notwithstanding.

standing, springs out of flesh, and blood, a little heightened out of their natural propriety. Such is the cunning of us all, none excepted.

It behooveth us therefore to apprehend, and learn all these things in God, that the light may be separated from the darkness, and that that notable difference and distinction, in this very point, be well known to us; least we take one thing for another, *viz.* flesh for spirit, Death for life, slavery for liberty, and for the free flowing grace of divine power.

These things, because a man, in his life time, is always willing to get, and keep Reconciliation, and eternal Salvation, are plainly known to a few, inasmuch as a man esteems those things in the place of God, and for things divine, which indeed do but hold him bound in a perpetual imprisonment, being that, which is his own nature, and propriety, *viz.* the fear of eternal damnation, by means of which he abstaineth from all external, and carnal filthiness, and impurity; and cuts off those things from himself: being then fully perswaded that now he is truly  
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at liberty, so that he will not proceed further on, and refuseth to deny, and resign up both the proper, and the imaginary salvation of his Soul, although he should experience, or feel in himself that the true righteousness, which is acceptable before God, is that very circumcision, that is done in spirit; and thence springs up the New-creature of God. However it is necessary that every one should first satisfie in all respects his own proper righteousness, holiness, and imaginary salvation, that in the end, he may rightly understand the difference of both, viz. of Light, and Darknes, and of the holiness that is from man, and that which is from God: for if he be not faithful in the smallest things, how shall he arrive at greater? which certainly is impossible. Therefore it behooveth every one to satisfy his own conscience, and with all moderation, and discretion, to obey the testimony of his own heart, that being raised up, thorough all the degrees of holiness, and being enriched with all the affluence, riches, and imaginary goods of his own spirit, he may at length be brought

brought to the divine poverty of Spirit, by the manifestation in him, of the divine righteousness, and of that degree which is, by far, the most excellent and exalted, as being that, which throws down all the rest; so as there remains nothing that can stand before it, which is not its own self. By this way we come to apprehend our selves to be poor, miserable, rejected, and condemned, yea blind, unhappy, and neglected, yea unfit to perform any the least good, who formerly ascribed to our selves all good things, righteousness, and Salvation, being confidently perswaded of our eternal life, and divine Sonship: Then, Then I say, it is that we find our selves to be wholly in corruption, and condemnation, at length, seriously understanding, that we formerly had not so much as the true tast of any good, which could compare with that good which we now see.

And then we come, and readily sit down by all other men, yea though they be the most profligate wretches, because, now at last, we begin to let before our  
P eyes

eyes with fear, and trembling, and condemnation, and to behold our corruption at the very bottom, so that, for the future, we reflect upon no one more than upon our selves; and if before, we reviled any, repulsed, persecuted, cast out, reproached, or looked upon them with an evil eye ( I speak of such as supposed, that they did these things, out of a godly zeal ) now indeed we become hugely wary, and leave every one to his own Lord, and Master; because this true combate, hath done in us havock enough, and begun its cruelty.

I was willing to unfold to thee these things by these few lines, which notwithstanding thou wilt better and more piercingly feel in the very thing it self; Therefore exercise thy life in these things, and shew thy self strong in them, importunately begging, and expecting all from God above, with all long patience, and sufferance, who will in his own time effect all things for thee; for here, we are not to run before, but follow after only.

Now therefore thou hast writings enough

enough, whence thou mayest learn, how to behave thy self in external conversation, and honesty, wherein thy conscience will, most notably, both lead thee, and condemn thee too. The Lord grant to thee to meditate, to understand, and to be wise, that, according to his will, thou mayst be instructed in his School, and by his discipline, that all may be consummated in him, and by him, and to his Glory.

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### EPIST. III.

*A Preparation to the entrance into the promises of God.*

*To the same Person.*

REmising all due readiness of my respects, most Noble Lady, having taken hold on this occasion, I am willing to send this letter to thee. For though, for some space of time, I did not visit thee by my letters, yet have I always been solicitous for thee in the Lord, with a continued readiness of my heart, and an inclination of my poor mind; being

otherwise certain, that much writing did not conduce any thing to the increase of grace, but the movings of God only do. And therefore I had determined in my mind to forbear writing, least perhaps I should thereby disturb the working of thy Soul, trusting in the divine mercy, that God himself would preserve thee to become more strong, and more pure, by his inward motions in thy Soul; and by purifying it, from all inherent evil affections, and the depraved root of inbred lusts, more then it is possible ever to be effected by letters written: For this is the work of God alone, and is effectual in them, who study, and endeavour, to submit themselves unto his will. For it is impossible that they who are disobedient, and never strive to quiet the accusations of their consciences, by conversion, can be so accepted of God, as to attain to the grace of Christ Jesus, to dwell in them; for he that is not faithful in the least matters, can never be made Ruler over greater things: if therefore any one is not faithful to his own Soul, with which yet, he is one, and firmly united,

united, how can he love God, from whom, as yet, he is far away removed?

In this manner it is necessary, that every one should strive, with all his might, and power, for the testimony of his own conscience, to renounce, his own proper Soul, as far as it is possible for him, in the sight of God, according to the highest degree of his knowledge: now if any one shall do thus, in that highest degree, with the greatest diligence, the Lord will in part enlighten the darkness of his understanding, as to perceive more profoundly, in himself, what is the true power of the Law, *viz.* what sort it is of, in him, *viz.* spiritual; and not only is concerned about an external abstinence from evil concupiscences, but much more rather, about the most deeply fastened root of sin in us, in which we all were conceived out from *Adam*.

For so long as the Root remaineth in us, the action, or power of the Law, is always against us, *viz.* the bottom being still polluted, not being yet purged by a true amendment, but by some certain kind of likeness thereof: And therefore  
the

the Godliness promised unto us, doth not only, and properly require of us, that we should desist from external vices, but that the very inwards of our hearts should be purified, so as that a man should be cleansed, and perfected most exactly, in his understanding, appetite, and in his will, that he may no longer serve the Lord, and obey him, unwillingly; inasmuch as at first, a most troublesome task is to be undergone, in turning away his heart from temporal, and spiritual captivity: but when he is united to Christ he must perfectly be freed from all the earthly concerns of his lusts. For seeing that, in man, there is nothing nearer to God, then the Spirit, or mind of man, therefore it behooveth, in the first place, to cleanse that, from the darkness, and grossness of reason, in which we are involved, by the fall of *Adam*; so that we may be lead into a fuller, and more pure degree of divine knowledge, unto which no man, yet abiding in his corrupted nature, can ever come.

Wherefore whoever desires to attain the true knowledge of God, and of himself,

self, it behooveth him, before all things,  
 to strive with all his might, to with-hold  
 himself from every vice, that is become  
 familiar to him, and to which he inclin-  
 eth, and which, sometimes, he commit-  
 teth even in this very work. For man,  
 even while yet he is in his corrupted na-  
 ture, in which he was conceived, is not  
 so far removed from the presence of God,  
 but that yet he still retains, in the su-  
 preme part of himself, an occult and a  
 most inward spark of some knowledge  
 of God; as it is notoriously seen, that  
 all men possess some kind of power in  
 knowledge, by help of which they dis-  
 cern good from evil, insomuch as whilst  
 they remain in the state of evil, they are  
 accused in themselves, by that same know-  
 ledg, but when once they are introduced  
 to the state of good, then they are at rest.  
 If therefore a man follows the dictates of  
 that knowledge, inherent in him, from  
 his first nature, and abhorreth the evil  
 that he knows, but sticks close to the  
 good, then at length, he arrives there  
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highest, and fullest satisfaction to that knowledge, which he hath by nature; whereupon, he is brought into great troubles of heart, especially if he be diligent about the study of Good. Moreover, because man is wont to fall so back again into himself, as that he doeth that which is good, rather from the force of his conscience, backed with some threatnings of the judgments of God, then from Love, and an earnest desire of the good, then he searcheth out means, by which he may be freed from that accusation of conscience. Now when he can find no means thus to bind down the appetites, thoughts, and motions of his flesh, but they always still get loose again, then indeed it is that he apprehendeth that tho all outward vices, and transgressions were laid aside, yet there still remains in the flesh the root of them, and that he cannot be freed by all his endeavours, grievings, and mournings, from that appetite of the flesh, ( which stirreth up in him Anger, Wrath, impure lusts, and vain thoughts, and such like ) but some time, or other, it will again seise upon his Soul:

Soul: and thus he comes to see, that he is not so set free from the dominion of the Law, but that he always must yet endure that accusation concerning the root of sin, yet lurking in the most inward parts of his heart.

Now although the more vulgar, and common, external knowledge of Christ, is willing to palliate, and cover over this inward stain, by the blessed death of Christ, saying, these things cannot hurt a Christian, Christ dyed for them; nor indeed shall I contradict them: nevertheless because Christ therefore came, and appeared, that he might destroy the works of the Devil, and that he might free the captive Soul, from the burthen of its sins, it is indeed necessary, that the same Christ should destroy the very foundation also of this satanical building, and by his own seed again sown therein, should thereby get the possession of the heart, and mind, as it ought to be done, and as it is agreeable to the Lord alone: Even as these things were figured out by the type of the promised Land, which was promised to the seed of *Abraham*, up-

on this account, that every evil seed might be eradicated from thence. But before things could be brought to that pass, the *Israelites* must suffer many mischiefs from their enemies, by changing the lives of many, for a most cruel death: as it came to pass in the wilderness, where every thing, that was still infected with the knowledge of old *Ægypt*, was punished with death, that no impure thing might enter into the promised Land. In like manner also, no impure thing is taken up by Christ conforming in us the promised likeness of his most holy humanity, but all these must first be laid aside by the death of sin, that we being thus purified by him, should be fitted unto his body, together with the most perfect, and common conjunction of Christ, as of the head of this body, from which all the members derive their motion; but the rebellious members abide not in any living body, unless perhaps, by an improper name, they have the name of Members, for such do as it were cut themselves off from the body, and set themselves against it, which case can never

never take place in any true Body.

Most dearly beloved Lady, I was unwilling that these things should remain unknown to thee, inasmuch as they are a preparation to the entrance into the promises of God, into Christ. (I say) and his likeness, who alone is our hope, and mark, and aim, to which we aspire, and tend to, which also I pray thee to somewhat more exactly consider, and ponder. The Lord grant unto us all his mercy, that laying down our load of sin, we may, by virtue of him, be restored in Christ, who mightily assisteth the hearts which are prepared, and submitted unto him, and helps to repress, and stifle the growing stains of sin, and afterwards, takes in hand the very foundation it self of our hearts, where the root of evil abideth, whence all the springing fruits do proceed, even fully to burn it up by the flame of divine righteousness. If God shall please to grant it, and necessity shall require it, I am altogether ready, according to my simple capacity, for the sake of thy holy advantage, to express these things more clearly in writing, trusting

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ing in the Lord, that by his help, thou wilt measure all according to the rule of righteousness, nor, either to do, or think any thing, but what is of the Lord, and what conduceth to his glory, and the furtherance of us in the Lord; that under the manifold distraction of worldly businesses, not the least moment of time may remain idle in us, but being busied in temporal matters, either in mind, or working, we may always direct them for the benefit, and use of our going forwards in the true steps of a Christian life.

Most dearly beloved Lady. the whole bottom, or foundation of thy heart is to be digged up by thee, and to be searched into, whether any thing lyes hid there, that is contrary unto God, and would not willingly be separated from thee, and which thou thy self canst very hardly let go: if any such thing should chance to be found out, thou must, this very moment, renounce it, and give it up to the Lord, with submission unto his will. My trust is in the mercy of God, that thorough the grace of Christ our Lord, it  
will

will come to pass, that things will go well with thee, and that thou wilt be put much forwarder, by having thus yielded up, and renounced the whole foundation of thy heart, sparing no one thing, which else thou, thorough the whole course of thy life, didst hunt after, with, at least, one half of thy heart, inasmuch as it is that, which is a state rather of enmity, and is an abomination before the Lord.

My Lady, I take a liberty in these matters, and that I might write to thee what is right, and true, I am not ashamed, by which means thou mayest, in a manner, know what thou art to do; and how the matter it self is to be cordially handled, I having this firm hope, that the Lord will not be wanting, but that he will hear thee, according to thy faith; and that he will indue thee with power; to whom also I give up my self, as a fellow-helper in this outward ministry, which is, and belongeth to the creature; being with my whole heart intent upon thy improvement; inasmuch as I am also become thy fellow-sufferer.

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The God of all grace and mercy be-  
 hold our misery, and free us from out  
 of these chains of sin and Satan, that we  
 being lifted up into the communion of  
 his sons or children, may be unloaded  
 from all burthens of the flesh, thorough  
 Christ, our alone Saviour, and Media-  
 tor, that we may always watch for, and  
 expect these things, with unwearied  
 sighings, and longings of heart. Where-  
 with I recommend unto God, thy self,  
 and thy family, but especially thy hus-  
 band; that the Lord would grant unto  
 thee prudence, to take care to order thy  
 family concerns, in the fear of God. But first  
 thou must begin with thy own self, that  
 if any truth abideth in thee, it may after-  
 wards flow forth from thee, or else thou  
 wilt make no progress, but all thy  
 labour will prove in vain and to no  
 purpose.

## EPIST. IV.

*That, by true internal poverty, we come nearer to the Lord, then by any imaginary riches whatever.*

*To a certain Woman pressed and burdened with Tryals.*

**M**ost dearly beloved Lady, when I understood thy condition, viz. that thou art deeply afflicted in heart, and that the senses of thy mind, will not be reduced to their former tranquillity; I am somewhat grieved, because I know, that, as yet, thou art too weak to stand under the load of afflictions: But indeed that which concerns this thy present state, and condition, under which thou art now kept, viz. that thou canst no longer enjoy a quiet mind, nor canst thou get thy conscience to be at rest, these all bid me hope the best of thee seeing it will certainly come to pass, that by these means, the Lord will raise thee up to greater degrees of grace, and favour; as it commonly happeneth to such of thy condition,

tion, whom God begins to afflict with grief, and temptations. For this is nothing else, but the laying bare of many depravities, with which our hearts are filled; which if the Lord is pleased to remove out of our hearts, then he thus exerciseth our whole man with Melancholy, so as we could rather choose to retain and keep them.

But it is more for our advantage, that those depravities which possess our minds, by reason of whose presence, a certain false and imaginary peace did deceive us, should therefore seasonably be withdrawn from us, before that we have run out (together with them) perhaps, our whole life; being perswaded that we shall gain somewhat, when yet we, being thus deceived, shall, in the end, be overwhelmed in our Souls, by an irresistible deluge of grief.

Therefore in this case lay aside all despondency of mind, for in Melancholy or trouble of mind thou pleasest the Lord more truly, and art nearer unto him, then if thou shouldest persist in a great tranquillity of mind, as that which is the effect

effect of a false security and peace: even as it is wont commonly to happen to those, who do promise too much to themselves, because that they do abstain from the false religion, and from the more gross acts of unruly sinners, and from all unrighteousness, or injustice; from which indeed we ought wholly, and always to abstain, but then if any one shall, for this reason, think himself cleansed, and to be made a Son of God, certainly conscience will oppose such a one by its testimony, and will convince him, that the very bottom, and foundation of his heart does yet abound in the root of sin, and of self-love, together with all those desires, and lusts, of which *Paul* does testify, that concupiscence is, viz. properly that sin, which leadeth away a man into captivity.

Therefore because commonly, he is accounted a pious man, who studieth to be of a good outward conversation (for more then what is without, a man cannot see) hence it is, that a man sticks always about these things, supposing that he hath accomplished all things, unless by

by chance, he falls again into some gross sin. Yet for all this the root of sin still remains deeply fastened in him: but the mind takes no further care, how it may come to the true purging out of all these, seeing it may seem impossible for a man to be freed from them. Which indeed is very true as to us, but to God all things are possible: hence it is found in the elect, that God even quite conquereth sin in man, and will rule and govern in the man, not only by plucking out all the external acts of the more gross sins, but also in the very bottom it self of the heart, yea and in the most inward faculties of sensuality, Love, appetite, and our proper will, by which all our external actions are governed.

If this thing were made more commonly known, and should be received by many, in good earnest, men would not go up and down with such merry gestures, and in such security as they do, but, without all doubt, would be convinced that they are sinners, and are, yet, at a great distance from the sonship of God, although now they think them-

selves

selves set on the highest step of divine  
 grace, and that they have just hope of the  
 inheritance of Sons. But if the Lord  
 should take away the vail from their  
 hearts, as it is done in thee, and should  
 rob them of that peace, which they have  
 gotten from without, they certainly would  
 be involved in the like miseries, and  
 streights, and would apprehend them-  
 selves to be the poorest of all, though a  
 blind security doth now perswade them,  
 that they shine in the greatest riches. Yet  
 the Lord, who is the searcher of the  
 hearts, and the reins, will in his own  
 time, most clearly uncover all, and will  
 bring them into the Light; to whom  
 we ought to submit our selves with pa-  
 tience, and long-suffering, waiting for his  
 salvation and redemption in us: for its  
 better by real inward poverty to draw  
 nearer to God, then, being by imagi-  
 nary and false riches, blinded in our  
 hearts, be hindered from the true going  
 forwards unto God. I was willing hearti-  
 ly to discover these things to thee, that  
 the true difference of thy condition might,  
 according to my small judgment, and  
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the testimony of my heart) become more, and better known unto thee: for I am of opinion, that thou thy self, if the Lord shall leave thee, for some space of time, in this condition, wilt come to know the truth of the matter more exactly, and to perceive those things, which hitherto have layn hid from thee. Now therefore weigh all things more rightly, which perhaps hitherto thou hast not done, even as many things, are wont to be lightly neglected. Yet I trust in the Lord, that he will stand by thee every where, least thy burthen should be too heavy for thee to bear, and that thou be not tempted beyond what is meet for thy weakness to suffer, according to his mercy: For our nature is not fit, without the divine help, to bear these burthens, in regard no support can appear to it, now, from any where else; because in whatsoever thing, it formerly was wont to rest, and to trust, all that, in such a state, shrinks far away: Nor can a man, in this condition, be better advised, then plainly to neglect all external temporary means, wherewith his mind was used to be delighted, and to

to renounce them quite, inasmuch as they are such, as will else still be the cause of many afflictions: Let him therefore do this, *viz.* let him learn to subject his whole self to the will of God, submitting himself to all that God shall impose upon him, in this his tribulation, with a firm resolution of mind, to bear them all, so long as it shall please God.

If a man can arrive at this renunciation, and submission, he shall surely find a wonderful advantage, and a strange renovation of heart, insomuch, that that which before was difficult, and hard, will be now pleasant, and grateful to him; and that which before, was meer terror, yea as death to him, will now be as a Sanctuary of refuge, yea life itself to him. And to tell it in short, all things will change themselves in a man, when the Spirit of the Lord ruleth in him, and impels him to the obedience of the Divine will: Whereas, whilst he is miserably led by the conduct of his own carnality, he will live, as governed into meer disobedience, under his own proper will: for which very reason

on the divine will is so troublesome to us, that we cannot be subjected unto it, nor yield up our selves to the hand of God, but rather, as far as in us lyes, we choose to save our lives, and not to lose them. But the Lord who seeks our advantage and intends nothing else but good to us, regards not that complaining of our flesh, but gives up our Souls thorough much sorrow, stirred up in us by an accusing conscience, to that we ought to subject our selves, till all impurity of our inbred and corrupted appetites be by the devouring flames of the divine judgment, consumed and purged away in us.

Then at length we come to apprehend the Lord: and to be willing, and to seek out both as well internally as externally, that all our perverse thoughts and sensual appetites, may be purified, nor to be no longer stirred up by our own proper will to all wicked desires, and pleasures, wherewith our corrupt nature aboundeth.

The Lord illuminate our understandings, and grant unto us wisdom, and true

true discretion, that every where and  
 time, we may contain our selves in good  
 order, under his fear, whereby we may  
 proceed, and grow in divine knowledge,  
 and grace, according to the measure of  
 our calling, and so at length, if it may  
 be, that we may be able to arrive to a  
 full age in Christ, according to the divine  
 Sovereign pleasure, and commiseration.  
 Let us with all our might and power adore  
 the Lord, with uncessant prayers, and  
 humiliation poured out before him,  
 least that which is temporary, and par-  
 takers of time, should find any place in  
 our hearts, but rather, that it be so ex-  
 pulsed, that the Lord himself may pos-  
 sess that place, even until all our thoughts,  
 words, and works be performed only  
 according to the will of God: and may  
 grow forth with all discipline, and obe-  
 dience, under the most mighty hand of  
 God, and that we may with all patience,  
 wait for, and expect his coming unto  
 manifestation: When he himself will  
 wipe away all tears from the eyes of his,  
 and give them eternal comfort, and true  
 salvation, unto which it now, in this  
 mo-

moment of time, behooveth them to be prepared, by a constant sorrow, and misery, by fear, and anxiety, by terrors, and by death: for they cannot like the common sort of men, spend their lives in meer pleasures, but he does always detain his under a rigid discipline, and many frights, and makes them drink down the bitter potion of tribulations, that all their internal faculties as well of spirit as of Soul, may be brought under the Cross; nor can they ever arrive at true peace, until every one of them learns, nakedly to yield up himself into the will of God, and contentedly to take of the potion mixed by God, and given him to drink, out of meer grace, and Love.

Now that this cup is bitter, is no fault of God's, but our own; and that because we are contrary, and enemies to what is good, and cannot bear to be purged, just like the vulgar people, whose troubles are increased by a mixt Physick-wine: For by nature a man flieth from all things which are hard, and produce pains, and yet there is no other way

way to be recovered, nor to come at  
 health, then by those means, by which  
 we are always more and more adapted  
 to Christ, our head, by a similitude of  
 his sufferings, death, and burial, that  
 afterwards by a like resurrection also, we  
 may be taken into him, and be possessed  
 of a never-fading crown of glory. For  
 now much we suffer together with  
 Christ, so much also shall we reign with  
 him, not indeed in this time of tempora-  
 ry abode, but in the truth and perma-  
 nency of spirit, and life: in which we  
 shall arise, and be excited to such a like-  
 ness of Christ, as consisteth not with de-  
 graded Nature, but is lifted up above  
 Nature, and is conformed into a spiritu-  
 al, eternal, and immortal life. Thus there-  
 fore all, and every one of them, in their  
 be-own order, may expect it will be, ac-  
 cording to the measure of the divine gifts,  
 be at the enemy, may, for the time to  
 come, have no more right, nor power  
 over our Souls, by reason of sin, under  
 which hitherto we have been bound,  
 and captivated, hoping for salvation,  
 and redemption in Christ, from all our  
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internal enemys, who force our Souls into slavery, so that in tract of time, we may in all holiness and righteousness serve the Lord, as present with us, all the days of our life.

He therefore that hath appeared on earth to preach the Gospel to the poor, and to the desolate, will comfort and cure our sorrowful hearts, and graciously set the captives free, he, I say, will in his own time, appear gracious to thy humane weaknes, and will bless thy internal poverty, and affliction with a great plenty of the fruits of holiness. Now these few things I was willing, according to the simplicity of my heart, and my mean gifts in the Lord, to write unto thee, from an earnest desire to serve thee, that perhaps some means might be discovered to thy heart, thorough the divine mercy, leading to a greater proficiency in the knowledge of God, and that thy Soul might be sealed up in eternal peace and reconciliation thorough the grace of God, and by his Spirit. *Am.*  
31. 1559.

## EPIST. V.

*For what end the Scripture was given, and how we ought most exactly to satisfy conscience, also concerning the difference between humane righteousness, and that which availeth before God.*

*To U. of W.*

**M**OST dear Lady, having this occasion offered, I was willing to write a few lines unto thee, giving thanks to you all, for your friendly inclinations of heart towards us: The eternal God grant, that that bond, in which we being bound, together in him, and do profess a mutual union to the true members, may become more firm, and may grow in Christ our Lord, according to his holy will, to his glory and our death. As to what concerns my condition, it is indeed, at present, such as is tolerable to the flesh, as long as it shall please God, for the bond of death remains in my heart, and in my members, and all the rest is known unto the Lord. The Lord himself take us all

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into

into his protection, that we may be preserved in his fear, this dangerous time, which, as I conjecture, cannot be done, but by most hard sorrows.

O would to God, we could, at length, come even unto the death of Christ, and feel it in our souls, which indeed is set before our eyes in the holy Scriptures, yet somewhat shadowed. O Lord, grant unto us that life, which the Scripture every where beareth witness of, yet oftentimes, by so frequent exercises of so many various readings, a man is but kept back, and distracted, when, as yet, it's in the first place necessary, that every one should observe himself in the acts of hearing, speaking, thinking, working, and in all else, where a man is busied about any other matters in things of this life, and that all these be, to his utmost put to the examination of his judgment, and that he most exactly endeavours & in all, hath a care to satisfy his own conscience; for so long as the accusation thereof endureth, by the guilt of any (though the least) transgression; it's impossible that peace can be found in his Soul.

Soul. Because as long as any one does not satisfy his own conscience, he is willingly kept a prisoner under sin. But the difficulty of this way hindereth many, as much as that which the Scripture saith, that no man can stand before God in his own proper righteousness; which is very true. However yet, if we are willing to trace thorough this most rocky way of our conscience, even to its utmost limit, it is necessary, that, at length, we should come to a mortification, and destruction of all our laborious endeavours, and then will our own righteousness shame us: On the contrary we all would dye, before ever we have lived, and glory that we have renounced our own righteousness, when as even yet we stick in the midst of our sins, breaking forth into outward acts. But the matter is to be otherwise, and more accurately considered, if we desire to make a proficiency in the Lord: for that life which we live in the flesh, is dead, in the sight of God, nor hath no liveliness in it, in his account. Yea furthermore, that life, which our Soul enjoys, whilst it confideth in, and

s bottomed on these or these things, must also be changed for a death, and it's by no means to be permitted, that the enormities thereof should rejoyce in its progress. For this life, which our Soul hath taken to herself, after this manner, springs from no where else, then from out of that imaginary righteousness, and holiness which we fancy is to be found in us, and which tickles us with a strange kind of sweet flattery, and privately is very pleasing to us, yea and gives to our Souls, a kind of tranquillity. These things are hid so deeply in a man, and deceive us, with such dissimulation, as if all were well with us; whence it is, that all things are ascribed unto Christ, because the man knows, that no such thing can be attained to, but by Christ. These are those things, whereof the Scripture maketh so often mention, viz. our own proper righteousness, our own proper works, our own proper holiness, and all such like, viz. if we trust too much to any of these means, which were granted unto us from the Lord, and stick rather unto them, then to the only true God.

God. For to love God, is no other thing, then most accurately to do that which he willeth, not for the hope of any salvation, or of any good things whatever; for the Love of God it self thus puts a man on, that he cannot do otherwise. And here it is, that we are able to search into the most inward corners of our hearts, whether or no we seek our selves else where either in Soul or body, and whether we serve God, and love him for this end, that our souls may gain salvation.

But here, for the most part, it will be answered; that whatever things are done, are done, only for love: yet nevertheless men do perform these things out of the terrour, and the impulse of their own conscience, as the scripture witnesseth. I say not all this, because I would detract in the least from good works, & set light by them, but rather that we should go on further, & not to rest here: nor am I willing we should sit down, in a private kind of peace, of having gained some steps only, before we be come unto the end, nor till the scope, for whose sake all this is done, be duly attained. And though there be others behind us, who follow up after us,

being yet a great way off; yet it is incumbent on us, because of our greater knowledge received, to put out this our talent to the highest interest, we can possibly, that in us may be found constant perseverance, if so be, at length, we can arrive, perhaps, to a true dying, having no need more to reiterate so often our renewing of death, so that all may together, and at once, remain buried also in Christ's death eternally; a more certain essential sort of death, (as I may so say) following us into that better state or condition.

Most beloved Lady, receive I pray thee, these my letters kindly, if perhaps they may prove to be of any use to thee in thy holy endeavors, and that we may, come at length, to the total renouncing our flesh, that then we may be judged according to the rule of righteousness, which the Law requires by Christ. For in Christ, sin is utterly condemned to death, and as much as we are planted together with him in the likeness of his death so much also shall we, thorough his resurrection, be received into the newness of the Spirit, who then performs in  
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Man the office of a Governour, and is to him in the stead of his life, whose place, before this, our flesh supplied: all that is beyond this, the Lord himself will manifest to us, when we come thither.

If therefore we have our inward senses rightly exercised by the Lord, and do firmly adhere to him with continued prayers, then will he kindle in thy heart some living light, which my dead writings can never effect, by means of which, being inflamed with a greater zeal, to renounce all flesh, we shall be able to offer to the Lord our hearts emptied, and set free by a meer, and pure submission unto, and a firm purpose of remaining, and persevering in his will: so will the thing prosper, and our work will more happily succeed. But why this work will succeed with so much difficulty, and with such a length of time, this is the reason, because somewhat still will stick close to the heart, which we cannot wholly renounce: for when but one half of the heart is yielded up, the offering remains impure, nor is it accepted: whence it is that the Scripture commands us to have a

great care of or to watch such a heart, which seeks double ways, and carrieth upon either shoulder, and halts on either leg, &c. For we cannot at the same time satisfy the flesh (conscience hindring us) and conscience too; (the flesh hindring us ) therefore it is necessary, that we yield our selves up wholly, as a pure offering, and grateful to the Lord, for such a one is received by the Lord, and blessed of him, that thenceforth he may bring forth fruit, and at length, that thence may arise the righteousness that is available before God. Unto which may the Lord promote us, and keep us by his infinite mercy in Christ our Lord and Saviour. The Lord preserve us, that we may persevere in his grace, according to the tenour of his most holy Will.

## E P I S T. V I.

*Being a Christian exhortation, which containeth many points, very useful and profitable to all Christians.*

*To the same Lady.*

**M**Ost beloved Lady, seeing that there remaineth no more time to me in this life, as far as by my utmost capacity of sense and reason I am able to judge, or is to me known, I am constrained of my self freely to open, and more and more to unfold my mind to you. Yet the true fruits of proficiency in the Lord, are not attained to by my letters, nor by our mutual converse appointed in the Lord of purpose, but only and alone by the grace and mercy of God: For that the same dependeth only on the meer divine commiseration, he best knoweth (yet only in Soul and conscience) who himself is exercised in the very work of the Lord.

In the first place therefore it behooveth us diligently to beware, that we be not

our lusts driven to that pass, as to think, that God is the cause of sin: whereas the night can sooner be made the day, then he be any such thing. Because in God there is no darkness at all, but meer light; and whosoever would come to know this work of God thorough his mercy, they must begin this knowledge with sincerity of mind, which seeks nothing else but God alone, *whosoever proceedeth with a double heart, is an abomination to the Lord.* Now doubleness of heart consists in this, when we are not with our whole heart, Soul, and thoughts given up, and wholly left to the Lord; also when we pour out our prayers before him with a heart, divided in two, whence also it is, that we are not heard according to our desires: For the Lord loveth us more then we our selves do love our selves, inasmuch as he is averse to our destruction, and always freely bestoweth on us, that which is most useful, and most profitable for our happiness, which indeed is that, which, at first, is unknown to us, but is at length made known to us, though by and thorough great afflictions;

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lections ; because that we were so far fallen into our desires, and into that evil which we call our Propriety, that we must first be subjected to great anguishes and griefs, before, we can become submitted to the will and obedience of God, which is that which can be never done without a spiritual death, and the mortifying of all our own powers, even as they sensibly feel, who are chosen, and lead by God into such a death.

Wherefore we are to endeavour, that we may most patiently accept from the Lord whatsoever he hath fore-ordained by his power over us, being to our utmost resigned up to him alone, continually imploring him by our prayers, and with hearts lifted up, importunately to beg his mercy, that by his grace we may be sustained, and preserved even to the end, nor that we may not be turn'd aside, by any temporal enjoyments, or by any case happening, which is able to make us, in this life, faint-hearted, but that we may abide confirmed in this way, with perpetually going forwards in the blessing of God, and in real fruitfulness.

I do not describe the cause by which we may perchance be drawn away, and turned aside, let every one try himself, for there are diverse sins which vex us, every one in his own state, being captivated by that evil which we term our proper evil in our own will, and desires, in which every one of us are kept bound or chained. May the Lord advance us forward to the true and divine communion, and to a willing obedience unto God, that we may be set free from all those bonds, by which thorough our own faults, we are inthrall'd: to which freedom notwithstanding, we can never come, unless we dye, and spiritually depart, in and by which, captivity is lead forth in triumph, after the victory obtained by the most powerful hand of God, in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, we being raised up again in Christ unto the true eternity, in the life of the Spirit; when that which is become old, shall remain cast off, neither shall any pardon be given it, but be condemned to death, and to be perfectly separated from life.

Let this therefore be our rule thorough  
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our whole life, that we endeavour to lay aside that which is a stop and hinderance to our hearts in the way of the Lord, which yet is nought else but our own selves, who do oppose our selves to the Lord, so that we come before him praying with half a heart only: when-as notwithstanding, if our hearts did spread themselves before the Lord, with a perfect resignation, and could abide in a continual progress of such a resignation, and in a firm purpose of catching at nothing more; being free, simple, and nakedly poured forth before the Lord, we should then find with an admirable success the power of the Lord in conquering of sin.

Yet it's not possible to arrive at such a liberty of heart, but by the special mercy of God, to which also are to be joyned our unwearied endeavours and prayers; For we have so encompassed our selves about with such a wall of separation, that we want the true discerning of our intellect by reason of that thick darkness, where-with our senses are deeply benighted; whence it is, that we always place with-  
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out our selves, the cause of our holding back, and of our barrenness, and complain that we are hindred, and over-ruled by things external, the contrary of which, if things proceeded aright, and we were found at the bottom of our hearts, would come to pals, so as that which is internal, would contain, and rule in a due order, all externals; nor would it be hindred by any thing external: and thus all would prove well for our use and advantage in the Lord. But the Lord will much better inform us in these matters, and effectually cause, that if any temporal things that are less necessary, become a burden unto us, that we shall lay them aside, so far forth as it is allowed to us, by our Conscience, in the Lord, yet not without a most exact consideration thereof.

For he who thus knoweth himself to be weak, so as he may easily be hindred by and from things external, standeth altogether in need, that he should constantly and earnestly beg of the Lord, that he may be kept unpolluted, and that his Sensitive faculties be thus, thorough  
urgent

urgent necessity, always kept exercised with continual prayers, and an elevated heart, which would never be done without necessity: for no prayer, doth more truly hit the mark, then that which floweth from necessity: for by how much the more pressing the necessity is, by so much the more piercing are prayers made. So that in these very evils themselves a remedy is found which leadeth us unto God, if so be our ultimate end be nothing else but God; and as to things outward, we propose to our selves to be obedient to nothing but the divine will, and to perform it most exactly. But this case doth wind in a man, into such difficulties, before it can be brought to pass, that it will concern him to ingage his utmost resolution, and powers to strive, with divers and most difficult pangs, and desperate temptations, which increase upon him dayly more and more. For just so it is with these combatants, as with the poor wild creature, which is driven up and down by the hunters, till the time of the Lord be come: Now the Lord preserveth us when we know it not, yea when

when we sink into swoons, and are swallowed up by straits: and then doth our death truly begin when all our arrogance is quite blunted, and suppressed. By reason of the weakness of my hand I could write no more, recommending you herewith unto the Lord, who can promote us all in his own way, and preserve us in a constant diligence, and in a perseverance of divine graces.

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## EPIST. VII.

*Which is the true way of coming unto Christ,  
very useful for Youth.*

*To G. of R.*

**M**OST dear G. I gave this to thy Cousin upon his departure hence to be delivered unto thee, that thy blooming youth may be more and more put on unto true zeal, for I was always in my mind, perswaded, that thou didst search out after that which is good. And therefore we are, in some measure, to serve one another, and to help forward in the ways of the Lord, it is necessary

that thou shouldst exercise in practise, that gift which thou hast received, and advance it unto fruit bearing, that thou mayst not only search after knowledge, and Science, but also to think of this, how thou mayest reduce thy self unto a oneness, which is not done by knowing many things, but in many things desisting from our own will, and in breaking our desires even in the flower of Youth.

For our own proper desire is indeed contrary to God, and this is the chief root out of which all Sins do grow. To him therefore that would arrive at the state of Christ, there is no other way allowed, then that, by the Law, he die to his natural desires and lusts. He that would retain and keep his lusts, and desires, supposing that only for a knowledge of Christ, apprehended in his understanding, he shall be accounted before God for a believer, this man certainly will wander far out of the way. Inasmuch as this same faith goeth no further, then into the understanding, his salvation also can go no further then into the understanding, and reason; so that it must at last

last needs dye in that death that is necessary to all Christians, viz. wherein Reason is destroyed : for in this death there remains nothing but the Soul, or mind only.

But if it be objected, that our faith, and knowledge do penetrate even into the most inward regions of the Soul, and mind ; I answer thereto. That then also it is necessary, that this our Soul and mind, when it shall live with such an estrangedness from the flesh, that it cannot but with great Nauseousness and tedious disdain, bear in its self all the desires and lusts which spring from the nethermost parts of the flesh, so as it would rather dye infinite deaths, and to be freed from them, then with pleasure, even once to perform them in the very act.

Behold, my G. this brief proposal, how every one ought to prove and try his faith. If any man believeth in Christ from the very bottom of his Soul, he must need be wracked with great dolours in his Soul by reason of sin, so that he will account of sin for the most grievous torture that can be found in all the

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world, and for his greatest enemy, and how then for the sake of acting it, can he enter into a friendship with it.

Although therefore the Vulgar knowledge of those who glory in the Gospel may say on this wise; Sin, if so be it is not perpetrated in the very act, though it should lurk in the heart, doth us no hurt: yet do thou (I pray) hear how Christ doth nevertheless assert; that he who looketh on a woman to lust after her, is already guilty in the sight of God: by which words surely Christ excuseth not, but accuseth the lusting of a man, and will really have it accounted for sin in the sight of God. Dearest G. I beseech thee, do not despond in thy mind, because of this hard saying, for all things are possible to God: I only write this of purpose, that thou mayest seasonably learn to judge of all things, least thou shouldst consume thy youth unprofitably, and that thou mayest bear fruit to God in thy own soul; they in the mean time who are of the dregs of the Vulgar though they may have knowledge, yet they lye down tired in sloth, nor do they oppose  
sin

sin with the least burning zeal, or break  
its impetuous assaults.

Nor yet doth this external abstinence  
from sins, and the debilitating of them  
suffice, for it's necessary to descend to the  
very bottom it self, when even the  
thoughts are to be judged in the presence  
of God. Far therefore be it from us to  
commit sin in the very act.

Also this my Letter intends this at least  
that thy young limbs be stirred up both  
night and day to the worship of God, by  
continued prayers, in temperance, purity  
meekness of heart, long-suffering, love  
of thine Enemies, as also in the Reading  
of Scripture, in holy proficiencies, and  
in other virtues conducing to Christian  
discipline: Concerning which, thy own  
Conscience will afford to thee a testimony  
all which being performed, thou wilt  
every day rejoyce in thy great success in  
the work of the Lord, that at last, when  
thy most miserable condition is known  
thou wilt be a terrour to thy own self  
and therefore thou wilt so much the  
more diligently call upon God for help  
that his most powerful right hand may

at length graciously support thy Soul, and conquer the power of the enemy in a real victory. The Lord have mercy on us all, and heal our diseases, and effectually cause us to hunger and thirst after his righteousness, least we be left naked in our own impurity.

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## E P I S T. VIII.

*How any one who is studious concerning the way of the Lord ought dayly to exercise himself.*

**M**OST beloved Neece, Because I understand, that thou earnestly desirest such a disposition of heart, as truly to walk in the ways of the Lord, I could not withhold my self, but must write to thee these few things, for thy greater confirmation in them ; that thou being once entered into this way, shouldest not desert from vigorously proceeding forward, and to adhere to the Lord with thy whole heart, together with a total suppression of thy carnal part. Be therefore diligently studious, that thy diligence be not tired out in reading, in humanity, in Silence,  
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in meekness, in temperance, forbearance, patience, and compassion; also learn to exercise thy self in all studyes of virtues, that thou being found faithful in little things mayest be made ruler over much greater: for if thou shalt not be faithful in these few things, assuredly thou wilt never be entrusted with more.

But I hope that thou wilt receive wisdom and prudence from the Lord, that thou wilt have a care of, and diligently attend unto thy own self, least some bitter root should spring up in thee, and so thou and thy Soul tumble head-long into destruction: for the flesh doth very subtilly assault a man, to beguile him, and turn him away from Godliness. Wherefore making a strict watch upon thy life and conversation, carefully compass thy self round, having cut off the world, and all wantonness of life, speech, and thoughts, preferring every one with all gentleness, and patience, not only the good, but also the evil, and the immodest. Learn also to bridle in thy self and to humble thy self, being always turned to the Lord in thy heart. Never let vain, evil, and

and unworthy thoughts arise in thy mind, but always oppose them with great earnestness, pouring out to the Lord fervent prayers: and if thou gettest any spare time on holy days, or other-ways, employ it in reading the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, or else of that little book intituled Of the imitation of Christ, and in these exercise thy self, and learn to ponder them often in thy mind. If thou readest any thing which thou doest not understand, call upon the Lord with ardent sighs and dayly tears, that he would open to thee the true sense of his most holy word for to be the Necessary food of thy Soul: for the more thou shalt follow the Lord, the more thou shalt understand of holy Scripture, and by how much the less thou art intent to wait upon the Lord, by so much the less shalt thou understand Scripture.

Therefore let thy constant endeavours be to approve thy self faithful in these things, which are *viz.* made known to thee in and by mortification, and a continual access to God by prayer, nor let any

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time slip by thee in vain, and without thus doing. If thou replicst that thou understandest not what thou readeſt; again ſay; that though thou mayeſt not underſtand all, yet is it incumbent on thee, to exerciſe thy ſelf in the ſacred word of the Lord, as alſo to be unweariedly ſollicitous about it. For by theſe exerciſes thou ſhalt ſooner be amended than by idleneſs; and theſe are the beſt means of inſtituting and of exerciſing a man for a better life. Wherefore I pray thee, be thou intent to the diligent reading of the Scriptures, and apply them unto the amendment of thy life, to the mortifying of all unrighteouſneſs, and to the instruction of thy own ſelf, until the Lord ſhall pleaſe to give thee a greater measure of underſtanding the fundamental meaning of Scripture, that thou mayeſt not be lead up and down by any man, but mayeſt be taught by him from heaven.

Now though all men boaſt of that they are endued with the Spirit of God, and are divinely taught by the Spirit of Chriſt, yet are they ſtill and yet

great distance from what they boast of: for  
 themselves all should have sought otherwise,  
 when as yet they have demonstrated,  
 before the door to grace could be set  
 open.

They think indeed that they are who-  
 rily dead, and yet feel sin, and the accusa-  
 tion of transgressions to be still alive in  
 themselves: nor are they nevertheless  
 willing to listen, when one tells them of  
 the mortification of such sins, and do  
 always defend their state and condition  
 by these or the like reasons, notwithstanding  
 the gainsaying of Conscience, which  
 they strive to quiet by outward perform-  
 ances, or ceremonies, concluding that  
 the obedience due to God consisteth in  
 these performances, and so pretend to  
 yield obedience to God without or out  
 of themselves, when within themselves  
 they find nothing but meer disobedi-  
 ence.

Whenas in truth, whosoever he shall  
 (no man excepted) who makes all  
 his aim at the true marke, he is concern-  
 ed first to satisfie inward accusations, and  
 to dye to every sin; for if we are dead,

to one sin, we shall wholly run into error if the rest be left still alive.

But say they; Christ dyed for these sins, and it's impossible we should be fully perfect: Well then! if Christ dyed for one sin, certainly also he dyed for another, whence it will follow that there is no manifest need that we should dye either to this or to that sin: let us therefore abide in the old nature of our flesh seeing that Christ dyed for our sins, and will make satisfaction for us. So is it (add they) but we are bound to mortify all sins that we can, but to be completely made pure, we cannot. We call thus, when we cannot get forward any further for men are apt to think that that which exceeds their power, is also impossible to God. But in good truth when a man can go no further, and hath born the sharpest conflict of all, and still something is wanting to him, the God worketh in him such things, as are above all humane Understanding, and doeth thus cleanse him from those sins, from which, formerly, he could not be let go free, but they always did inwardly accuse and blame him.

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Whosoever therefore affirms that he may come into communion with God, whilst he still remains under the condemnation of sin, that man deceiveth himself; for God hath no communion with sin. He that would have a Communion with God, and Christ, to be extended also to himself, must be a sanctified Man, even as he is holy, without all accusation. Let not therefore more be ascribed ( I pray ) to us, then becomes us, nor let us boast our selves richer then we are. My dearest Necce, I write these things to thee, least thou shouldst here or there, according to these or these ceremonies or external works be deceived, if some body should perchance propose such like unto thee. Rather first purifie thy self from all unrighteousness which sticketh fast unto thee according to the testimony that thy own Conscience giveth thereof, as also the Scripture bearing the same witness; and never look without but always within thy self: for thy own Sin, thy own Idolatry, thy own Pride, thy own Malice, thy own unrighteousness is to be made known unto thee,

thee, and from them thou must dye, then will the Lord freely bestow more upon thee: and as thy soul shall come to want some more things, it shall abundantly obtain them. Herewith I reecomend thee to the Lord who is able to lead thee into all Godliness, and into the true study of walking in his ways.

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### E P I S T. I X.

*How one may arrive and come at the best portion which is God himself, thorough many tribulations.*

*To the same person.*

**M**AY much grace and salvation fruitfully abound in thee, in a true and dayly proficiency in the way of the Lord, into which we being in our weakness entred, are obliged diligently to go thorough therein, that being freed from our weakness and inconstancy, we may at last be lead unto the truth of eternal Union with God; least that in the multitude and variety of things we be drawn hither and thither and be further sollicitated, or pref-

pressed but that we may obtain the best portion, which is God himself, and never more be deprived thereof.

But before we can come at that, all those faculties must first be mortified, which hinder God from accomplishing his work in us. Now how much any one laboureth in that mortification according to the most inward testimony of his conscience, and approveth himself faithful, so much fruit also shall spring up from this deadned seed, which is to endure much hail and snow, and cold, and miseries of weather, before it can put forth true fruit, and such as will prove advantageous to a man.

Thus also is it with the seed of that thin tender knowledge which is sown in us; if this is at length to produce such fruit, as may be useful to any man for to be a true nourishment inwardly to his soul, then indeed is this knowledge to be purified with many temptations, assaults, difficulties, griefs, desertions, yea all such like hardnesse, and least it should remain carnal it is plainly to be slain and mortified.

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Alas!

Alas! what sighs of heart break out, before this year of tryal be run thorough, in the Wilderness; partly because of the ruggedness of the way, and partly because of that pinching hunger and thirst of Soul, and the want of all divine comforts: then flesh and blood look back again to *Egypt*, and repent that they came out from thence. In this state we must act cautiously, and vigourously call upon the Lord, least we be tyred out, and the tediousness of the ways roughness quite overcome us. For sure it is, God will make good his promises to the full, leading us from and thorough hardships, to a more soft condition; thorough disquiet to peace, thorough wants, to all plenty, and thorough defects, to all abundance; where all tears are to be wiped away from our eyes, nor shall any sorrow be ever able to touch us any more.

My Neece, I therefore write these things, because, I know, that diverse tribulations hang over us, under which if we demean our selves with courage, we shall certainly be endued with great grace from the Lord: Let us therefore  
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rightly observe the perswasions which are dayly set before us from the Lord, least we fall back again into the self-same misery

Trust not thy flesh, for it is manifestly contrary, and in enmity to the divine will, and therefore it is to be suppressed strongly by using all diligent watchfulness, or else it will deceive thee by its subtilty, & will seduce thee to a turning aside, although it may appear very gentle unto thee.

Submit thy self to sufferings, that thou mayest with a ready mind bear whatsoever is grievous, burdensome and tedious, and endure, even to the end, and in this dayly cross possess thy soul with patience. Let not the Length of time be irksome to thee, offer up to the Lord thy carnal mind opportunely, for all that belongs unto it must at last be made subject to the Lord either sooner or later. Endeavour this sedulously, viz. to give up freely to the Lord thy flesh and blood, thy soul and spirit, that he may do with them according to his own good pleasure, so as thou mayest never hereafter find any contradiction in thy self about these, but that Christ alone may be in

thee, thy will, life, and sole governour. The Lord have compassion on us all. I pray thee give my hearty commendations to *A.* the wife of thy brother, and give her this letter to read, in some measure to stir her up to the Lord, whereby she may, with a heart prepared, endure her many griefs, and sorrows, and willingly to accept them from the hand of the Lord, as from him who by these means, striveth to chasten, and to purify her; So that she also bewareth that she be not insnared by any sin, but will strictly observe her life, *viz.* to please God, and to perform that which will be pleasing to him, yea also let her learn to sustain willingly, what he shall lay upon her, that that which is at first sharp or sower, may at last become sweetned to her in the Lord, and she her self at length may remain wholly yielded up to the Lord. And thus I recommend thee to the Lord, who can advance both thee, and all of us by his grace, that we may become his living Sacrifice, and sweet Saviour to his heavenly father, that our labour may not be in vain, but  
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may dayly increase with fruit-bearing.

## E P I S T. X.

*A brief information, how a man who begins with zeal, is used to be lead thorough continual sufferings, and conflicts: and what kind of fruit are at last brought forth from those dolours.*

*To his Sister, A.*

**M**Y most beloved Sister, That all may be well with thee in the fear of the Lord I desire with all my heart: and thy further growth in him, does very greatly rejoyce me. For although in these dangerous times, many new things are here and there produced from multiplied discords, one shewing this, and another that way, by all which the hearts of many are disturbed, and they are disquieted contrary to the intention of Godliness; Yet God hath prepared an eminent glory for them, who, with a valiant mind, do break thorough these things. Also because now a narrower way is proposed,

posed, then in times past, therefore also a greater grace is now apprehended to be in man: for by the benefit of straights and anxieties are gotten all the good things, which God hath promised unto man, and nothing is more contrary unto God, then an imaginary peace and tranquillity, and such a condition, as in which it is well with a man, and in which he liveth a quiet pleasant life free from any vexation of adversities, misfortunes, and other mischiefs. Briefly, God is never farther absent from us, then when all things happen unto us according to our own wills, and when we enjoy every where a prosperous success, whereas straights, misfortunes, a cross, and a pressing need are nearer to God, be they in matters great or small, provided that in these evils, we so behave our selves, as to bear our sufferings with a willing mind, and with joy as from the hand of God, that thereby we gaining the knowledge of our captivity, and chains, do endeavour forthwith to put them off, and to dye.

For so long as we find any thing yet  
in.

in us, which stirreth us up either to sorrow, or to joy, so long are we bound and captivated to our own selves, and are the Slaves of Nature: Now if we being set free from the first natural generation should penetrate to the other that is spiritual, and should be led into the true state thereof, certainly then no adversity, misfortune, injury, yea nor fire, nor sword, nor any thing else that is a reliet of nature can overcome a man, which should be accounted by us for evil, as the Vulgar accounts them for evil; for whatsoever happeneth to a regenerate man, is accounted by him as a means to the eternal glory of God, so that to such a man nothing is sweet or more worthy his esteem, then every adversity, and injury, wherewith he is wont to be treated from others; so that by how much the more of them are sent him from God, so much the more he will judge that he is propitious to him. But there are many things required first, before we can learn to acknowledge the hand of God: for when we are first overwhelmed by any adversity, then  
we

we either throw the blame upon man or we complain that God doth afflict us : and this proceeds from this, that we yet stick, and lye in our sins, because of which, we are accused in our own conscience, and rendred Enemies to God. Therefore are all things to be laid aside, whatsoever we acknowledge to be unjust, though they may seem never so small, and we must, go forward with a stout, zeal, so that we must both day and night fall down upon our faces in prayers unto the Lord, that he will please to bestow on us freely wildom and understanding for the true knowledge of our selves, consisting not in words but in deeds, that afterwards we being our selves destroyed, may truely dye, also that we may reflect upon no man in the World, but upon our selves, by which at last we may learn to acknowledge the good hand of God, who gives to his own, nought but the cross: and this is the supream and safest way, by which a man is saved.

My dearest Sister, I have here in few words described to thee the Type only, or the

the picture and shadow of that fruit which groweth out of the cross, yet if thou art willing to know the thing it self in the truth thereof, and to apprehend it with a right faith, thou thy self wilt seek it properly as from thy own experience. But before thou canst believe that the cross is of such great advantage to thee, thou wilt feel certainly many adversities, and miseries, and it will behoove thee to cut off many of thy accommodations, that so thou wilt behold nobody else but look at thy own self: for it behooveth thee to find salvation in thy own self, and so also thou art to make experiments of dying, for thy self: He that is honest without himself, he also is saved without himself, and the salvation of such a one stands allways in need, that being corroborated with the sweetest promises, it should oftentimes be renewed, because it proceedeth not from God, but from man, whom it concerneth to use an external comfort because he is destitute of all internal comfort. For the dwelling of God is not but in the most inward recesses of our Soul, and we then  
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at last acknowledge and own his voice, when we are wholly freed from nature, else we remain always separated from him, by and thorough that Enmity which is put betwixt God and our nature. As much therefore as we still persist in our own nature, so much are we still separated from God, and do understand his whole Essence, government, means, directions, gifts and discipline in a sence depraved, and perverted by nature, for it holdeth us so captive, that as often as God sends us certain means and helps for our [spiritual] death, presently this very nature by her counsel turns us off from them to others, that at last this chastning rod becomes frustrate, and fruitless, and these gifts of God are accounted for plagues, afflictions, and heavy burthens, and are received with murmuring, and indignation. Most high God! how evil is our eye! may the Lord graciously please to open our eyes in his own time, that at length we may be able to see.

## E P I S T. XI.

*An admonition how Youth may be put off from the world, and how it ought to seek the Lord with all modesty.*

To J. M.

**D**Earest J. That which I peculiarly desire, is that which also, I trust, the Lord will effect, to direct thy ways to the chiefest scope, whereby thou mayest now in this life-time modestly compose thy senses to the studyes of the paths of God, and to the dayly and nightly endeavours, after virtue. Thou hast now seen the world, and hast experienced that there is nought to be found therein, in which can be any quiet of Soul, inasmuch as she is much rather lead in this world into disquiets, and troubles.

Because therefore the Lord by his long-suffering hath born with thee, and hath deigned most indulgently to wink at thy youth, it now altogether would become thee to be more diligently set upon thy watch, by better using thy time,  
then

then as yet hath been done, whilst thou art still tossed up down by the waves of this world.

The Lord will, I hope, more and more draw thy heart with fervour to himself, that thou mayest seek him more seriously, even as formerly thy mind was wont to be stirred up by the novelties of the world: all which yet have in time vanished, or will yet vanish, seeing none of all things temporal could ever persist, as we dayly observe with our eyes that all are subject to change. If therefore any one shall indulge his inclination in time, it is needful that he be, together with time, afflicted with sorrow, so, that nothing is more safe, then to withdraw himself from time, even with the loss of all, and to turn himself to eternity, which is capable of no mutation, and in which nothing dwells in our hearts, but a pious and constant tranquillity. That we may come thither, we must endeavour with all our might, to learn to blunt the Edge of all our pleasures, and to abdicate our own will and appetite, so that all things may be cut off  
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and supplanted, in which our flesh would live, and play the wanton. Then shalt thou truly please the Lord, who also will strenuously help thee to rout the enemies of thy Soul, that thou shalt be carried from one righteousness to another, together with all proficiency and increase in divine knowledge and Love. Herewith I commend thee to the Lord.

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## EPIST. XII.

*How all things are to be accepted from the hand of the Lord with true Submission.*

*To a certain betroathed Gentleman.*

**D**Earest N. The Lord will in due time turn thy grief of mind to be for the better: for as in all, so likewise in this are we to be given up to the divine will only. When the time shall come which he hath proposed to himself, no man shall, or can prevent the matter, but if the time be not come, we indeed may desire it in our own wishes, but the thing shall want its success. Not that I strive, as it were, to resist thy desire,

fire, but that the alone providence of the Lord is to be accepted, so, that there be no difference of choice in us, whether we are to wait, or whether to go forwards, and on the contrary. For this is to wait expecting on the hand of God, to stand submitted to God, and not to live to ones self, or to follow ones self, or to desire.

If we find any difference in our selves, so, as that we desire rather this then that, then the whole thing is from our selves, and not from the Lord; for that which is from the Lord is free, and wholly commended to God, without any desire of this or that thing, so that the divine will be done, which also is done, if we find our selves uncloathed of all desire, how advantagious soever the business may seem in our eyes.

Yet by all this I shall not intangle thee, for I know, that thy mind earnestly affecteth a freedom from all appetite of fulfilling desires. The Lord who is a true helper in all needs will be mindful of thee and of all of us, and will comfort thee with his wonderful operations and will

will lead the from the Love of the Creatures, to the Creator of all; whence all have their Original, and emanation, and to whom, as unto their end, all things do return in their own time: so that we also, even all of us, must appear in him, by our departure and death, in which notwithstanding his eternal subsistence is manifested, as being that which is to be glorified in all those who, by the benefit of his death, and of the death of all those which are found created in them, do arrive at that eternal communion, which by the most powerful hand of God, quickeneth and raiseth up the dead, but not the living.

If therefore we would enjoy the same resurrection with Christ, we are also to be transplanted into the same death, being yielded up to God with all our might, and becoming obedient even to death.

May the Lord instruct thee with a true understanding, that thou mayest meditate on his will with a piercing and continued consideration, and may that  
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be a help to thee in thy sufferings, according to his mercy, and may it direct all things for thy benefit, as they are decreed in him from eternity. Which is what I confidently believe he is about to do, and to bring all to the desired end, by his eternal grace.

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### EPIST. XIII.

*An Exhortation raised from that consideration, that whatever is without God, tendeth to eternal death, and destruction, and how we ought always to set the divine judgment before our eyes.*

*To the same person.*

**M**OST beloved N. That it is so long since I wrote to thee, this is the cause, that I wanted an opportunity according to my desire, as also that I placed more confidence in the Lord, then in my own letters being fixed in this firm hope, that he would direct all things to the best end, and that he would apply a remedy to all

all distractions of thy heart, and that he would thrust them all under his obedience: For even as I my self according to my simple way, do confide in the Lord alone, in all my necessities, waiting for help from him only, so also I judge the like of thee, with firm belief, that the Lord will out of his compassion behold and look upon thy case, and will deliver thee from all thy troubles of heart; although this thy state may press thee to so much the more diligent, and fervent, and more continual calling upon God, and to a greater abode in his fear, because else it can be no otherwise done, but that all labour, glory, cogitation, fruit and pleasure of the flesh, with all those things which belong unto the world, and have communion therewith, do all, at last, together tend to eternal destruction, nor can they, by any hope of life, be firmly fixed to eternity; for Death, and an eternal blotting out do pass upon all things which are without God!

But the faithful and merciful God will have compassion on us, that we may be subjected to his chastisement, with

a continual meditation on the divine judgment, under which it behooveth all flesh to tremble, and to give glory to God alone, that thus being yielded up unto God, we may be wholly governed by him, and that we may serve him in all righteousness and holiness, as it becomes the Sons of God.

God grant this to thee, wch I wish from the very bottom of my Soul, as the Lord also knows, that we may together remain given up to the Lord both in body and soul. O would to God, that our hearts could be always mindful of that misery, destruction, and eternal death which hangeth over all flesh, and where it is truly made manifest, how far all joys are distant from us, as also the pleasures in this earth, together with all the advantages, pride, and other vanities that are pleasing to our flesh, and all the other motions tending thereunto.

Nevertheless from the Lord I always hope that which is best, viz. that it will come to pass that he will purify us miserable creatures, even as gold is purged by the fire, and that he will wash us from

all impurities. The Lord grant that our familiarity which we have in divine love, may not, by these sufferings, be diminished or decreased, but rather be confirmed by the divine benediction, which is fertil in all who are patient, and who in Golinefs, and the fear of the Lord, do constantly persevere even to the end of the fight, although they were vexed with all manner of tryals.

The Lord of all grace have mercy on us all, that we may never but be proficient, and seriously, and diligently walk in the way of his fear, that we may always be more and more endowed with his grace.

## EPIST. XIV.

*A brief Instruction how any one may in due order arrive at Regeneration, and whence it is, the new creature may have its Original.*

*To the same person.*

**D**ear est N. I could not withhold my hand, but must send this letter to  
 S thec,

thee, seeing I am not at leisure to come unto thee, therefore this Epistle shall supply the want of my presence. For I am wholly perswaded in the Lord, that thy heart, yea, when not admonished by me, will not yet be tyred out of the continuance in the work begun, and in the growth in the fear of God our Saviour, least that any one happily should disturb & confound thee by these or any other perswasions; for to come at the very thing its self, there is no need of many rules and exhortations.

Search narrowly into thy own self, and if thou canst find any thing for whose sake, thy conscience shall accuse thee, then it concerns thee to desist from that, and to dye thereunto. This therefore is requisite, that thou learn to examine thy self, whether thou sufferest any thing against thy will, and with a certain kind of indignation, nor art thou willingly subjected with humility to all others: For its necessary that in all respects, thou shouldest account of thy self from the very bottom of thy heart, for the least, and the most despicable, and that thou

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willingly submit thy self to every body, yea to him that injureth thee. If thou wilt endeavour this, thou wilt soon find in thy self a great defect, nor wilt thou willingly perform that, but wilt be moved to indignation, and to impatience: But if thou art never looking back, and art subduing the flesh with a just and true zeal, and wilt accomplish the rooting out from thy self the serpentine nature, at length, by the breaking forth of the divine illumination, thou shalt find great grace in these things.

But here is need of great and accurate examination, and the Lord is at all times both night and day to be call'd upon with a fervent mind, that he will bestow wisdom on thee to know thy self, and all thy stains of nature, even the most hidden, that thou mayest be able to cure them diligently, to renounce them, and wholly to dye unto them. For after that the flesh is withered, and nature dead, the new creature may at last be planted in thee, whose source is out and from God, and not out and from man, and the admonitions of man, nor out

and from any external ceremonious rite: for it is born of God, who is a spirit, in our spirit; so also is all the true spiritual circumcision of all things internal in our Soul, where it is also promised to us, that by the holy Spirit, the eternal God, the Saviour shall be raised up in us out of his own seed, who shall abolish all enmity, which still lieth between God, and the inward man himself, and will eternally unite us with God, and will bring us to our Original, which is God himself.

Dearest N. I should indeed writ more of this to thee, for I further desire, that thou wouldst thy self set too thy hand to the performance of these things, and that thou wouldst get a living sense in thy heart of all these. For in thy own self thou wilt find a true monitor, who will, more rightly then I can, observe thy defects; neglect him not, but lend thy ear to his accusations, and then forthwith will thereupon follow certainly, very notable advances. Also the Lord, who heareth the desires of all who persevere, will not reject thy prayers and tears, but to all whatsoever thy heart

heart, pressed down with straights, and griefs, proposed to its self, he will behold with merciful eyes, and succour thee with a strong hand. And if sometimes he may seem plainly to have deserted thee, nor that he will ever hear thy prayers, then do thou fully believe, that at this very time he is nighest unto thee, that he may succour thee with his help: for by how much the more miserable, the more anxious, and the more deserted any one is, so much the nearer is God to him, the helping of whom he then most speedily performeth, when no comfort, nor help is found [unto or] for our desires. And this is the true knot of all piety. The Lord grant, in his own time, that thou mayest truly apprehend this in thy own self. For the grace, and word, and promises of God do abide in man in a living sense, nor can it be expressed in words, how the very thing it self properly is: and although all writings may give testimony of this word, and of this grace, yet are not they properly that very word, and the very Salvation of God, for the virtue

and operation of these ought to be livingly expressed in us. The Lord be mindful of us all thorough his mercy!

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## EPIST. XV.

*How Youth is to be supported during its weakness.*

To F. S.

**D**Earest F. We hope it will so be, that the Lord will direct all to the best end, and will stretch forth his helping hand to that young man to make his voluntary entrance, that he may be brought to a greater firmness, seeing that he is not yet exercised in the ways of the Lord, and he still flourisheth in his Youth. But the hand of the Lord is liberal towards young and old, and is stretched forth with plenty of grace, where, and whensoever he shall please.

Therefore the Lord (I hope) will remember this weak one, and will hear his dayly complaint, and in his time will help him; for when all the creatures fail, and all remedies vanish away, and there

there is no other deliverer found or invented, then will God alone, of necessity, present himself as a Deliverer: For the Lord will look back upon all such, whose hearts he hath of purpose put in the wine-press of tribulations, that being left nakedly poor of all evils, so as they appear dried up, yet after they shall thus be subjected to his judgments, they shall not want retribution, but shall abound in his blessing by the communion of the blood of Christ poured forth, and of his eternally prevailing merits, and of the reconciliation made betwixt God his father, and our miserable humane nature.

It would be profitable for him, if he should remain with thee, all the winter, that so he might enjoy a further introduction, and should learn more firmly to set his feet in the ways of the Lord; now when he is yet of an infirm age, and is more infirm in zeal: for it is our duty to lend a hand to the weak, and to be a prop to them, as it was done for us, in our youth: although I my self have not extended my age very much: yet have

the bonds of death bowed me down under the judgment of the Lord, in the prosecution of my misery with continued terrours: The Lord have pity on me, and graciously discover to me his countenance shining with the light of grace, and so enlighten the darkness of my heart!

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## E P I S T. X V I.

*A fair admonition to his Cousin German; wherein he very greatly demonstrates a most tender care of his Soul, hitherto had with solicitousness.*

To M. D. W.

**M**OST beloved Cousin, I was altogether obliged to write, in what state our affairs are, for though hitherto for some good space of time, we have been somewhat separated as to bodily presence, yet I am assured, in the Lord, that we were so much the more diligently excited to a mutual care, by an inward presence of mind. The Lord knoweth, how mindful I am of thee, and how much

much care I have for thee in the midst of my most sad conversation, filled with all griefs, and in my constant combate. But I trust in the eternal God, and his providence, that he will with stretched out arms lead and keep us all under his own discipline.

Now because I have crept thorough many dangers of mind, how great the power of corrupted nature is, is very plainly manifested in me, by and thorough the power of God; though that also is come to pass by and thorough innumerable anxieties, in all which yet, the glory of God every where revealeth itself, upon which account I am deeply concerned with a most vehement sollicitousness for those who are my fellow-sufferers in these straits, to whom the Omnipotent God will reach out his hand, and seasonably set before their eyes the virtue of his grace, which lyeth hid under those sufferings, that at last the man may be stirred up to the desire of the true cross of Christ our Lord, in which all the treasures of divine grace are known in their highest beauty, without which

no man can be set free from out of the chains of his nature.

And here indeed there is need of great caution, and we must diligently adhere to the Lord both day and night; for often times nature cloathed with the outward shew of good, presents her self to us, but if she be tumbled down into death, then will her fruits be at length truly made known, and the power of God will shine forth so much the more gloriously. The Lord of his mercy be mindful of us all, that we may wisely order our conversation, and the forces of all our enemies being all overcome and broken, we may at length arrive truly at the true brightness of God. For the wall of separation hindering that clarity, is great, which it behooveth with unwearied labour to diminish thorough the benefit of the cross, and with daily torture of mind to destroy.

Yet the eternal and merciful Lord pierceth thorough all darkness as doth the Sun, and so refresheth those that are in an agony, with their pains, that his grace and glory never shine forth more clearly,

clearly, then from under sufferings; although whilst we yet remain subject to vanities, and are still captives to creatures, that claritude is still very much diminished; for so long as we yet are busied about images, the efficacy of truth (which seeing it is to be without any image, cannot then be united to them) is very wonderfully hindered. For God is but one only, and to know him from the very bottom of our hearts, is all the skill, and is such as is never learned in an undisturbed life.

Dearest Cousin, I do open to thee as it were the interiour bosom of my mind, shewing, whither all my labour tendeth, and at what mark all my whole being, and all my words and thoughts do aim at with grief, and which I continually, with tears of heart, pour forth before my God, and do with hope, account the Lord will not reject me poor wretch, but chastise in his way, and will bless with increase my labour after the decease of my nature. My Cousin, as to what concerns those friends who have changed their dwelling, their outward con-  
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dition is as yet tolerable, as also the outward conversation both of the Mother, and of them also is full of piety, even as formerly: But if we look further, even to the utmost power of nature, and to the very bottom of the Soul, about these, the business have not so well succeeded, even as neither can these be attributed to them all in common, nor are they wont to be given, or received by words, and admonitions. To the Lord therefore I commit them, who in his own time, and according to his own good pleasure will advance those persons higher. For they earnestly listen, and are delighted with my present discourses: but how pleasant they be to them even in their very Souls, the Lord knoweth, for I do not apprehend that their progress forwards is yet so great: and perhaps, the Lord will yet for some time keep them so.

But for my part, I order my conversation, for the most part, with my self only, because many discourses and admonitions to others, do very much disturb me: when yet all concerns, as well in-

inward as outward, I freely would so deliver up and oblige to the Lord, that I would think, say, or do nothing but to the Lord alone; yet how much difficulty I shall every where find in all these, the Lord himself knoweth.

Yet he who is faithful, is never left destitute of power, as most miserable I do find thorough the mercy of God, who helpeth my arm to fight.

As to our other familiar she-friend, she receiveth all with her whole heart, and a willing mind, whither they concern the understanding, or the will: but because of that sollicitous care wherewith she is involved in outward things not a few, as also because of her trade, the true fruit cannot yet spring forth from the true root. But the Lord who is faithful, administreth, as I perceive, all means for the removing away by divers sufferings, these hindrances, and of bringing forth this fruit with deep pangs, so that I hope, at length, that the death of nature will follow in the end. The Lord look in mercy upon her, as likewise on us all, that in his time, and according to his

his good pleasure we may come to the true essence of divine clarity, and that we all being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, may serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness all the dayes of our life, now and for ever incessantly, in inaccessible clarity, *Amèn.* In the year 1552.

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## EPIST. XVII.

*A wholesome Admonition, in what steps the progress of the Just doth consist, with a Conclusion concerning Esau and Jacob.*

To J. W.

My John,

**I** Heartily wish that all thy affairs may have good success. Having an occasion thus offering it self, I was willing to write these lines unto thee, that by the benefit of them, we may be promoted to continued progresses in the Lord. For I hope thorough the grace of God, that thou maist daily go forward in that truth, and in the true Circumcision of thy heart,  
and

and not in the acquisition of many Sciences, and of divers Knowledges, wherein the greatest part of our time is consumed, and not upon that, for the sake of which yet, life is given unto us, viz. that we may know God. But God cannot be truly known by science, but by finding him in our selves, so, as that which we know of God is found and expressed in us, and in our Soul, so that we our selves are not far distant from that which we acknowledge for good, but are united with it, not in or by opinion, but in very deed and truth. But these things can never be fully accomplished, unless first we dye to all those which we our selves have and possess in our selves, which is that that is called the old man, who very subtilly exerciseth his dominion in man, according to the variety of mens conditions. If the flesh be still gross, also its fruits, and vices are gross. Now if any one will supplant his external vices, there is another more subtile thing dwelleth in man, which he had never before known, because it formerly did stick to him in a gross

grosser substance. And seeing that the Scripture also doth sufficiently propose it, we are diligently to labour according to that Scripture, because it is that which is ordained of the Lord for this end. Having therefore received of the Lord sufficient knowledge concerning these things, let us be diligent in our indeavours; for little knowledge is necessary thereunto, if so be the heart it self be but prepared, which incessantly, both day and night called upon the Lord, with intimate desire aspiring to a union, so that no creature can any more move it against the Lord, and turn it away from him.

May the Lord give unto his, mercy, and be a help to our misery, in which we being yet bound in the darkness and chains of death, are still captive. My *John*, I communicate my heart to thee in my letters, even as I enough know that thou also seekest my prosperity so that let us both together seek the Lord, being perhaps not far distant in the Lord, one from another. Presently after thy departure, it was decreed by

the Senate that *E.* and *W.* do leave their dwellings, so that they must be gone from hence. The Lord bestow on them his grace and mercy, that they learn to bear these things in true patience, even from their own brethren, and to accept from the Lord that cross, for their own advancement, and for the rejection of all other things, and that they may resign up all to the Lord, and turn off from them, their brotherly Love. For *Esau* always remained the brother of *Jacob*: but that *Jacob* received the blessing, was done of grace, according to the election of God, in which indeed *Jacob* did stand, but yet without boasting, and without pride, for it behooved him always to bow himself before *Esau*, in sufferings, without murmuring. And although *Esau* behaved himself with a very proud carriage towards his brother, yet the blessing was continued to *Jacob*, though *Esau* endeavoured to snatch it from him again by persecution. For *Jacob* lived not only in shew, but in truth, when he dwelt in tents: On the contrary *Esau* cared only for all outward things by labouring  
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and hunting. The Lord grant, that we may so rightly immitate the birth of *Esau*, that *Jacob* may at length come forth: for the birth-right was due to *Esau*, but for this end only, that *Jacob* should be brought forth. The Lord have mercy on us.

NB. *The birth of Esau, signifies the birth out of works under the Law, but the birth of Jacob signifies that that is of faith under grace.*

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## E P I S T. XVIII.

*Being a most excellent admonition concerning the Education of Youth: together with that wide difference, wherein the old Philosophers are far distant from Christians.*

*To Dr. J. Velsius.*

**D**Earest Dr. That my young Nephews have succeeded well in your house was to me altogether grateful and most cordially acceptable, for I know that you will take care of their affairs by a diligent inspection, for the sake of that relation that is between us, whereby these growing twigs may be advanced in their

true increafe; for they ſtand greatly in  
 need of a prudent overſeer, till by their  
 own experience in the future accels of age,  
 they alſo do attain unto prudence. The  
 Lord grant to them his grace, that they  
 may well place their time as well in ſtu-  
 dies, as in piety, in which all conſiſteth,  
 ſeeing that the Lord ought to be the end  
 of all ſtudies. To this mark therefore  
 are they to aim, and to ſeek the glory  
 of God, and not their own, nor are they  
 to fall into themſelves.

Alſo I hope that my Uncle will de-  
 liver them to you with all advice unto  
 obedience, and ſubjection, and I hope  
 that they will perſevere in the fear of the  
 Lord according to the capacity of their  
 age: But we conſide in you, that you  
 will not be wanting to them in the beſt  
 counſels, eſpecially that they may lead  
 a Godly, and ſober life, and that they  
 may be turned away from all youthful  
 appetites, and from ſuch errours as break  
 forth at ſuch an age; moreover that if  
 they commit any thing againſt the Lord  
 according to their ſlender wit, they may  
 in time be brought to the obſervation of  
 their

their conscience, by the benefit of which  
 they being more diligently restrained,  
 may always abhor to sin. My D. that  
 I thus write, nothing but my inclination  
 towards my Nephews causeth it, for else  
 I am aware, that you will educate them  
 prudently, and in the fear of the Lord  
 wherefore pardon the liberty I take, that  
 I blush not to propose somewhat like  
 thereto, inasmuch as that what I do, is  
 with an eye to that zeal wherewith we  
 are both heated to find out the ways of  
 the Lord, when as I apprehend us to be  
 both alike, and to have altogether the  
 same inclination of heart mutually one  
 towards the other. The Lord help us  
 yet more and more in love, as far as pleas-  
 eth him, so that we may but be found  
 in a continual progression thorough his  
 grace, least our time be found to prove  
 empty and void of fruit before the Lord,  
 but that we may always proceed from  
 righteousness to righteousness. Even al-  
 so I wish the same to my Nephews, that  
 forthwith, at the very beginning, some  
 agreeable distinction of Religion may be  
 instilled into them, that they may learn

to discern all things with judgment, and not easily to take up their rest in outward means, one only excepted, *viz.* Jesus Christ as expressed in his true obedience & finished in his Soul even unto the death of the cross. He is set before us for an example, as our only scope, by the benefit of which we may in true illumination come to the eternal mercy of God. It will be therefore very profitable for them to be led as it were by the hand unto this scope, and that they may learn radically to satisfy their own consciences, exercising themselves in them, from their tender years, and to have no confidence in any other means set or contributed out of themselves. And although they should find some virtue in themselves, such as it wont to be found in the serious studies of some of the heathen, such as are Temperance, Long-suffering, meekness, rigour and severity of discipline, or any other, that may be introduced into our minds by sedulity, and natural discretion; yet are not all these that very thing, which is proposed to us in the image of Jesus Christ: For their aim was no other then to temper-

pe-

perate and govern their bodies under the discipline of honesty, and to keep them in due order by the moderation of Nature: but in Christ a certain kind of life is produced, which consists not in nature, but above nature, and unto which the Wise Gentiles could never arrive, because they were led only by the light of nature, in which God doth only so far operate, and manifest himself, as far as he can be know out of himself from his creatures, which also hath its defects and limitations, and may be changed: which things are such as are not in God, because he remains eternally, and abides glorified in his own subsistence and essence for ever and ever.

Now how much they have written concerning the knowledge of God which is in Man, and which they have in diverse places attributed to the mind, that arises not from elsewhere, then from the ingenious principles of the purer wisdom, as far forth as they were able to comprehend of it in their more elevated reason: But they had no light and virtue of a certain real and essential immutation, as it were in its own self, as being that which manifested

testeth it self far beyond science,<sup>ic</sup> and that  
 by this way, our most high God expref-  
 seth, and giveth forth himse'f not only  
 notionally, but also essentially in all who  
 receive him, with a superabundance of  
 those graces, which in his Son he pour-  
 eth forth upon us; so that our labour,  
 diligence, and studys are plainly useles  
 to this matter, but the grace of God  
 alone produceth this supernatural life,  
 and new creature in man; the natural  
 man, all this while, together with all  
 his old age, being utterly silent and con-  
 demned, yea dead. Therefore no active  
 power, nor any life can remain extant  
 in us; for if any such thing sheweth forth  
 it self in us, then in truth, we are not dead  
 to our selves, but we yet live in our own  
 proper work, neglecting the promise  
 and grace which hath appeared in Christ.  
 I do not therefore say thus, because I can  
 contemn and reject that same honest and  
 tried life of the Heathen: for I wish that  
 we all could subject our life to such a dis-  
 cipline, and that we could by far outstrip  
 them! There are not therefore to be de-  
 prived of their praise, but rather we  
 ought

ought more commonly to be filled with shame, seeing that we will boast of a greater grace from the Lord, and yet are not come to that state of virtue, which was in the heathen, but we are hurried too and again in all confusion of carnal lusts.

The Lord correct us in his mercy, and help us all seriously to endeavour to insist on the best ways, even as also I heartily pray in the behalf of those my Nephews that they being lead thorough their whole youthful age, in the wayes of the Lord, may subject themselves to discipline, and apply the bridle to their carnal inclinations, even from their tender youth, satisfying their consciences, and the testimony of a most close examination made before God and their own Souls; that they may be further advanced by the Lord, if it shall so please him, to that eminent grace, and expression of his most high glory in the life of the spirit, which being in a flourishing condition, all things past do vanish away together with their glory, that all may be renewed by the first fruits of Christ, and the power-  
ful

ful hand of God, manifested in the Resurrection of the Lord.

Now therefore I trust in the Lord, that he will effect all things well, and direct them unto the best end: yet let us employ all the diligence we have, lest being conquered by sin, we become subjected to our flesh, and may my Nephews exercise themselves, the most they can, in those endeavours, that they may learn to repress their youthful and inordinate affections and appetites, which will without doubt spring up in them at their own season. The Lord seasonably grant to them to own the witness of their conscience against all these, that being kept safe from them all, they may never consent to any depraved inclination.

### EPIST. XIX.

*That there is a certain especial difference between the exalted rational Zeal, and the Zeal that is pure and Christian.*

*To the same Person.*

My Dr,

I Have recommended thy case and purpose to the Lord, who can safely keep

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us

us all by his Grace, and shew to us our errors: for though we are for that purpose subjected to sufferings, yet nothing is more wholsom for us than a discovery of our spots and defects, which is not wont to be done without our indignation and opposition. But if the Spirit of Christ must restore and enliven us all, then plainly must there be no place left in us for bitterness of spirit against any one: For this is alone the Doctrine of Christ: *Learn of me for I am meek, and humble in heart.* For all hearts that are puffed up, are in his time to be brought low, even as alas we find it in many. The Lord keep us most miserable worms, for I never am frightened with greater horror than when I behold my self. The natural man scratcheth to himself by appropriating to himself all things whatsoever God bestows upon him out of free grace, so that all things also which are in themselves pure, by this appropriation, become as it were infected with poyson: Now if Nature were deadned, and the understanding purified, then indeed such usages of Gods gifts would not be so multiplied. But now that ev  
 which

which we call [ I ] is so great, and our corrupt Nature, through its own self-pleasing, is so faln and sunk into its own self, that we wait not for the time of trials with some difficulties, and restraint, and prayer, together with a hope in the promises of God to be fulfilled in a fit season, as it hath been foretold by the Lord. The Lord be mindful of wretched me that write thus, and be helpful to thee, according to his own, and not according to my will. I also very earnestly intreat thee, that thou take not in bad part this my freedom in writing to thee; for my mind never desisteth from having a kindness for thee. But high pride of heart, and a contemning esteem of our Neighbour, as also the doing him injury, never is allowed a place in the Christian State, but rather that which hath a fair shew of some sort of Zeal that is natural, mixed with Mosai- cal rigour. For nothing hath appeared in Christ, but meer sufferings and death, silence and patience even to the Cross, upon which even to the last gasp of his life he signalized his obedience, in which he was subjected to his Father without mur-  
T 2
muring;

muring; also that high Majesty of his  
 eternal Godhead he did not take up again,  
 as he might have done, but rather bore  
 in himself humanity, and imbecility, and  
 abiding in humanity, and contempt even to  
 the very death, he was crowned with Vi-  
 ctory. For if the external assaults of his  
 enemies could have moved the internal  
 nature of his eternal birth, then indeed  
 that which is immovable, could have been  
 moved by some outward violence, even  
 as alas, it most commonly happneth to us,  
 that our whole humanity is shocked in-  
 wardly and outwardly, when yet we do  
 think it to be the zeal of the Lord. But  
 before we can come to the purity of these  
 motions, as it manifested it self in Christ,  
 against them who dishonoured God and  
 profaned his Temple, certainly there  
 are many things to be eradicated out of our  
 fleshly part, if we would be thought to be  
 wholly burning in zeal of spirit. But, as  
 I hope, the Lord will, in his time, mani-  
 fest these things to us more clearly: for  
 when we are grown old, we must carry  
 so ne things with great pains, which whilst  
 youth flourisheth with a flaming zeal we  
 can-

cannot own and undertake : Because all that is talked of death and dying to young persons, they cannot in good truth come to them, seeing that their bones and marrow are alwaies full of all fleshliness with that fervent vigour, together with a full strength of the growing faculty, and voluptuous tendency, which for the sake of its own power and the glory of self-will, is wont to oppose it self to God.

But then if any one proceed further, and draweth forth all his strength even unto the top of all his age, then comes decreasing, that we are unwillingly lead into the will of God, by a manifest other process; and then those judgments seem to hang over us, which once we decreed to others, and that youthful life free and wanton, swelling with zeal, is now by the just judgment of God, under the decreasing of old age, condemned to death; but then at length succeeds understanding and discretion, together with continual sufferings in the ways of the Lord even unto our death, and the proper sentence pronounced to us: for just as all that ought to dye, that is possessed of

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life, also is that matter here. For God alone, if he be truly in us, is conjoyned with death, but not with our life; because no flesh, how pure so ever it be, can abide in his sight. For whatever shined forth externally in Christ, even that by a like death, must be done inwardly in us, if so be we are willing in the resurrection to be incorporated into a communion of his glory. Otherwise we stick only but in the flesh of Christ ( though glorious ) contemplating alone the life of Christ's humanity not yet glorified, but we hinder the growth of that fruit which through the death of Christ in the resurrection by the supernatural birth and a new life is poured forth into us with eternal grace. The Lord open my mind to you, for here I acknowledge my understanding to be too weak and slender.

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## E P I S T. X X.

*An acknowledgment concerning the disputation held at Francofort between John Calvin,*

Calvin, and Justus Velsius, of the power of Man, or of free-will.

To A. G.

**T**He Grace of our Lord, and his mercy be upon thee, and on all those who fear the Lord and seek his truth.

Most beloved *A.* concerning what thou didst write to me, about that dispute held at *Franckfort* betwixt *Velsius* and *Calvin*, my opinion is, That *Velsius* did stumble therein, whilst he attributed too much to the power of man, for humane power is judged and condemned by the Lord, if it be before a man is made partaker of the divine birth, because what is new-born is of God, and not of man, it is eternal and immortal, even as he is who begat it. But on the contrary *Calvin* failed in that point wherein he rejected all the powers of man universally, which indeed I allow to be true, unless that I also judge that that knowledge which lieth hid in man, and convinceth him, doth yet partake of reason and humane power, although the Lord doth afterwards offer to the heart

the light of the Gospel, and the understanding of a man submitteth it self to that: But for all that he is not yet one with the light, for no man receiveth this light, but he in whom the reason and strength of man are on the Cross become dead with Christ; now such a one thenceforward, because of the communion he hath received with the death of Christ, is also again raised up by the same Spirit of Christ, so as the Spirit of Christ thenceforward becometh his life, his own reason and all his own powers abiding in death, nor is there a Soul living in him, but by the vertue of God: and thus the man comes to renounce all his own strength, and all his own righteousness in the sight of God, and becomes conformed to the righteousness of God in himself, which the natural man never knoweth, nor can arrive thereat. Therefore because the Judgment of *Calvin* reaches not so far, and he himself is not yet dead to his own reason & strength, he indeed bore witness against his own self, because that which in the Epistle to the *Romans* is demonstrated to be death, by  
the

the Gospel (*Rom.* 8. 10, 11. and 6. 5, 6.) keeps him in life, the light of the Gospel serving him for that purpose, even to his own proper commodity. For the Gospel was not divulged till after the Resurrection of Christ. And then at length Christ the Son of God was acknowledged to be in us, otherwise our acknowledgement was not concerned, but only about the person of Christ according to the flesh, from whence it is apparent, that we our selves are still carnal, and though we be not plainly like to the ruder part of the World, and do account our selves for imitators of Christ who have left all, yet still we are to be made liker unto Christ, and to be planted into his death. Furthermore, I here further acknowledge, that no man by the strength of Nature, derived from *Adam*, can ever attain unto the eternal mercy of God. That study indeed, and that labour by which such a man in his solicitous endeavours is tired out, before he can arrive at the grace of Christ, I acknowledge for humane, and that it is subject to the Law; but that righteousness, which one acquireth by this study,

is not as yet that righteousness which is prevalent in Gods sight, for this is, at last, after the Law, constituted in us by Christ. First therefore a man must labour under the rigour of the Law, even to the highest perfection of himself, and to the greatest innocency he possibly can; yet when all this is done, the Soul is to feel, at length, the judgment of God, and seeing it cannot possibly abide therein, it falls manifestly down into death, and then at length, is it by Christ raised again into the life of the Spirit.

But now the acknowledgment of the righteousness of God, in common, is by the Church, which is nearer to us, proposed in such a manner as this; That God thorough and by Christ creteth salvation meerly without any addition of works: which I grant: But because these, under the law, obtained no righteousness by the benefit of Works, there being put no study or rigour, therefore they also cannot for Christ; lake renounce, nor forsake their goods, seeing as yet they had gained none. For they would have them renounce, what they have not,  
but

but in the interim, they suffer loss also in that which they have not yet arrived at. That therefore which they say, is true, but it is not rightly apply'd by them, as all the Scripture doth demonstrate, that it is by their own faults, that they come not to the truth. Nevertheless I am unwilling to deny unto them all grace for their portion and according to the measure of their gifts ( seeing that they study with all their might for Christ, and by the help of the Scripture do hear somewhat of him ) provided they be faithful in what they acknowledge, and that to the utmost. He that neglects this, is condemned by his own proper judgment.

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## E P I S T. XXI.

*The difference between Repentance and Regeneration, in relation to a little book of Diederick Phillips, which was printed concerning the New Creature.*

To J. W.

**D**earest John, that acknowledgments of Diederick Phillips concerning the

<sup>t</sup>he New Creature, I do partly own for  
 ruth, if it be not stretched further then  
 it reacheth, viz. that it can, according to the  
 testimony of Scripture, lead to Repentance,  
 and to lead a pious life. But if that Re-  
 pentance, and life so corrected thereby, he  
 would have to be put for the New Crea-  
 ture, whilst yet the Conscience is still  
 under the burden of sins, then is it erron-  
 eous; for whilst that no death hath as  
 yet happened, and still sin lieth so power-  
 fully in the whole man, that by means  
 of an accusation it often driveth the soul  
 into sadness, the Soul is yet under the  
 Law, for by the Law in our consciences  
 we are convinced of sin. And though a  
 man may force into silence that accusati-  
 on, and that burden of sin that torment-  
 eth our conscience, and that by Scripture-  
 promises, and so comfort himself, yet  
 it must be confessed, that then he still  
 abides in the state of the old Man, and  
 is not yet arrived at the death of it. For  
 the New Creature is not subject to sin,  
 therefore also no accusation of the Law  
 in the Conscience can touch it, for then a  
 man liveth wholly under grace, and his  
 mind

mind stands in no need to be sustained  
 by the external comforts of the Scriptures,  
 or also by the absolution from sins, accord-  
 ing to the testimony of Scripture, it should  
 bring forth to him a greater confidence;  
 for his life is in the Spirit, and consisteth  
 under the Law of the grace of God:  
 wherefore also the conscience in its puri-  
 ty enjoyeth the highest peace, remaining  
 sealed by the Holy-Ghost: but in them  
 who are still under conscience, the Law  
 of sin still exerciseth its power, and con-  
 science doth still accuse perpetually for  
 some sins, so that it hence appears openly,  
 that such are not yet dead to the Law,  
 because the accusation of the Law doth  
 still remain in its power, so long as by  
 the transgression of the Law somewhat  
 is committed against conscience: and  
 though we will not confess, that we are  
 under the Law, or under the accusation  
 thereof (notwithstanding, that there can  
 be no accusation, but by virtue of the  
 Law still reigning here or there) yet is  
 the thing manifest by conscience its self,  
 which thorough an accusation for sin,  
 rendreth us guilty. If therefore we could  
 stand

stand in purity by the blood of Christ, according to the inward man, then indeed the Law by its virtue, which it hath in the Conscience thorough sin, durst not so assault the Soul of a man, as that he must seek comfort out of the Scriptures, and to be reconciled with God, and to be confirmed by a new promise of grace; because grace in the regenerated hath taken most deep root according to its own true nature, so that such have certainly no need to seek out some remedy out of their own selves. Which whilst others do, they do in this very point testify that they have not attained to that of which they boasted, and which they, by the testimonies, of the Scriptures, attributed to themselves, in the very truth, and according to the proper essence of the thing. For the old man, who always by force usurpeth the empire in man with transgression ( which indeed is termed a tripping, and is made light of, yet nevertheless in the sight of God, it can never be tollerated in the new man, without real mortification ) alledgeth a contrary testimony, viz. that we yet live

the life of the old man, nor as yet are disposed unto death, because that no sin can be committed against our wills, and without pleasure or delight. Hence therefore is it manifest, that we still are kept in the life of the old man, and are not yet arrived at the new life: for a man comes not to the death of natural strength, in his carnal life, and with the complacency of proper will, or by the study of proper righteousness and austerity, but against its own will, *viz.* it is to be subjected on the cross, to the obedience of God, by the means of pouring forth of the blood of Christ Jesus our Lord; into whose communion we are taken by a like death, according to the inward man, so that on the cross we wholly put off our natural life which we had in the flesh, being buried with Christ, and afterwards raised up again into another supernatural life: so as the power of the Law, which being as yet not perfectly killed, lurketh in the members of our natural body, is wholly enervated in the mind and Soul, and in the whole humanity, having utterly lost all right in and upon the life of man: For  
a man

a man is not excited into such a life, over which the jurisdiction of the Law can domineer with a deadly accusation, but when it hath fully finished this judgment in man by this death, the man also, by the benefit of the same death, is altogether freed from that Law.

## EPIST. XXII.

*Being a fundamental Relation, in what properly consisteth the Oeconomical Government of the Family of Love.*

*To the same person.*

**M**Y John, I received thy letters together with the books, and having somewhat perused them, I gain'd the understanding of the greater part of the opinion, yet I shall keep the Books till thou comest. But the opinion of the Writer is contrary to my mind, because it consisteth in the knowledge only of a seeming divine truth, and not in an essential truth of God. And this is my opinion, seeing no man can be more instructed according to this way, than the Writer himself.

himself of these Books. If I may understand his fundamentals from his Books, it cannot possibly be, that any of those who are inferiour to him, can more happily explain the thing to me. Yet I am willing, that thou shouldest enquire how they carry themselves in their conversation, & that thou wouldest as exactly & as possibly thou canst, find out also the rest of their state or condition, for when thou shalt come hither, I shall more fully discover to thee my opinion concerning those Writings. Now I only ask pardon, seeing that matters are thus, the cause whereof, if it shall please the Lord, I shall tell thee, at thy coming. May the merciful and faithful God have mercy on them and us, that in an acknowledgement of their darkness, they may be led by the Lord in the straight way unto his essential truth, before which the natural Reason which inordinately appropriateth God to it self, may utterly perish: whereby I fear they are still too much bound, though they think themselves clearly set free therefrom. For all that for which they labour and contend, and which they  
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account their utmost aim, as far as I can imagine, must yet be judged of God; for that which reason endeavoureth to effect with them by knowing, all that, must be God himself, so that nothing but God can acknowledge himself in us; we in the mean time, being by a real death of body and soul, as to our creaturely part, wholly laid aside: and then that life, which ought to be in us, can be nothing else but Christ, as *Paul* saith likewise, so that after we are buried by death, we are no more raised up again into Nature, but into the Spirit; For nature remaineth condemned upon the Cross, and being once dead, is not again revived: Now I judge that nature in these people is still egregiously, and in very deed, and especially alive; although they may think, that they are already purified, because that they perswade themselves, through their ignorance and blindness, that they have already plainly conquered that combat of an accusing conscience. I write all this to thee with the greatest brevity, because thou didst demand my opinion, but when (God permitting) thou shalt come thy self,

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we will talk more concerning them. My Opinion therefore ( as I said ) is contrary to these Writings, and my mind can no waies assent unto them. For that aim ( which the Writer himself calleth the Intellect of God ) in my sense is indeed nothing else, than that they would have Nature, as yet not deadned, to become a propriety to themselves, when indeed Nature before it be dead cannot be otherwise in itself : for in it the highest death consisteth. True indeed that by reading I find somewhat concerning Death, and of the abnegation of the reason, and the discretion of Nature, so as that the Author would have all humane wisdom and knowledge overturned, before we can come to the truth of God : yet nevertheless the Soul of a Man doth remain proper to him, yea though he renounceth his intellect, so that in this very point the Writer erreth, in which he taxeth others, and in truth far more vilely, seeing that he thereby would come to a greater knowledge, but especially that he, by the means of his temerity, would arrive at that, which others seek by means

means of worship and ceremonies. For these, from a vow, do love their body, goods, wife and children, that they may possess the inheritance of heaven: but they do forsake their natural and humane wisdom and reason, that they may obtain something that is better, *viz.* the understanding of God, and yet both of them are still captivated in that, that their Ipseity or Iness still remaineth proper to them, although to some more miserably then to others. Now it is impossible that they should, this way, arrive at the truth of God, and can possibly be planted into liberty, as in the sight God, because that they are not lead in that true, and as it were that essential death, to be found in both Soul and Body, but are only instructed by knowing (though for this very reason they reject others of a certain death that is knowable to the humane wisdom. And because as to their own strength in which they live they dye not in body and soul, being wholly condemned before God, hence it is that they usurp to themselves, as their propriety, that intellect of God, that is

that they themselves might by the benefit of that thing conserve life which properly ought to be the condemning sentence, and the death of their ipseity. For if the Truth of God should enter into them in & by a certain essential state, it would be impossible, that a man could endure one spark thereof, without being melted quite down. Therefore we must dye, not only as to our wisdom in the highest degree, but as to our own proper Salvation, that God alone may be our Wisdom, life, and Salvation. This done our ipseity is condemned before God, and thrust down into a death ( according to the flesh ) which is as it were essential, whence nothing can again bud forth, either in respect of God, or of the Creature, so that whatsoever had bin ours, ought to be altogether made subject to its death, judgment, and sentence of condemnation. That same small last Chapter is contrary to that writing, inasmuch as it determineth, that sometime calm seasons may be gained, even according to the flesh ( for so I transfer it, even as the writing its self speaketh ) so as they then

then may esteem themselves pure, because they who are purified, know how to apply all things to a true use. Which I also affirm, but in its own meaning, but that at which this writing aimeth, is contrary to my mind: for the liberty of Christ belongs to the inward man, and doth only affect the mind unto eternal salvation in Divine Truth, but the flesh is condemned, and suppressed and bound down into death, so as that no man can then rightly use the Creatures of God, but with grief and misery, because that in all these a man may behold his own death, in which formerly he had thought to have found life; and yet with these very things he is well contented, acknowledging this divine judgment for truth, and so remains yielded up into death. But the Inward man is then conversant in eternal joy, being signed or sealed by the Spirit of God.

I have wrote this in haste, that I might satisfie thy desire, according to the testimony of my mind. The Lord have mercy on them, on us all, and pluck us quickly out of our errors. Alas! who  
am

am I, a miserable wretch who thus wri-  
 teth? I beg Grace of the Lord, for with-  
 out his Grace I shall never be advanced,  
 nor abide in him.

## EPIST. XXIII.

*A further consideration concerning the opi-  
 nion of H. N. (Henry Nicholas)*

*To his brother A. W.*

**D**earst Brother, thou maist read  
 over this small Treatise, and send  
 it back again to me, because I must treat  
 something thereof with N. that I may  
 oppose him somewhat about those things  
 which he accounts for true; for that  
 which he makes his scope is not pleasing  
 to me, which they call, the Intellect of  
 God, in which both heaven and earth  
 are indeed locally moved, and every  
 creature vanisheth out of its condition  
 or state; and yet in the same mystery  
 and inheritance they conclude nature to  
 be left alive; whereas notwithstanding  
 Nature cannot in and by its life arrive  
 at that pass, but only and alone by the  
 bene-

benefit of its death introduced into it, by Christ our Lord and Saviour, and that in so much verity, that Nature appears no more with its own proper life, but remains eternally cast off with the death and curse thereof. But that Nature which they call purged, and dead to its reason, in my opinion, doth indeed only depend on principles of understanding and science, but not on Truth itself, for hitherto it hath not approached to the essence it self, nor is united therewith, for though Reason layeth aside its natural discretion, that thereby it may be nearer to the divine intellect; yet for all that, the intellect is not yet then made one with the Essence, but is rather contrary to it, and as it were, an enemy to Truth, seeing that that spiritualized Nature hideth it self under the shew of intellect, but not of essence, and is in that still entertained. Who shall deliver a man from these intricacies? The Lord have mercy on us all. My Brother, I therefore write thus, that I may also discover to thee my opinion for that man is endowed with no small understanding: yet he is deeply seduced

and is deeply wise, but withal he is deeply to be disputed with. The Lord keep us humble in the Truth, that that which belongs to death, may be also thrown off into death, but let him reign and rule to all eternity.

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## E P I S T. XXIV.

*Being a brief argument, that the foundation of the family of Love is laid and built upon carnal liberty.*

*To the same person.*

I W. was here, and hath utterly and cordially renounced the thing its self, because he had experienced & found from their presence, that they were infected with the venome of carnal liberty, and that all issued out of that fountain. Also I restored to him the books, if haply they might be willing to have them restored again to them; he also was most fully satisfied, admiring that so sublime an understanding was subject to errors, for he confessed that my opinion was, beyond all doubt, true, seeing that a man is always

to be subjected to divine terrours. But that such elevated spirits do fall into errors, is from thence, that they too much covet their proper security, whence at length springs up boasting, and pride, and then, after that, a fall. The Lord preserve us all from evil, according to his great mercy, that seeing it is of grace that we are saved, so also in grace are we conserved, and not thorough our own selves.

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## E P I S T. XXV.

*Concerning the Opinion of Plato.*

*To the same person.*

**M**Y brother, I send thee back the little book concerning *Plato*, which when I had read, I found just so as thou writest: For the falling of these ( who call themselves the family of Love ) is subtil, though in that small tract they are mightily defended, all things being interpreted for the better, yet the excuse relisheth not well with me, except I should say that by their ultimate scope, to which they think

think they shall come, by the means of Love, their wisdom is shameful, as in them, so also in us, yet with this distinction: for what in them is righteousness, truth, and wisdom, must be to us unrighteousness, falseness, and foolishness; if so be, that glory to the Lord, must spring up thorough us: all which yet they are willing to reserve and ascribe to themselves, as also did the *Jews*, though in a more excellent degree. Now it becometh a Christian to dye as to them both, and by the Lord to be condemned to death, viz. as to wisdom and righteousness. Moreover, may the Lord also freely bestow on us his grace, according to his most holy will.

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## EPIST. XXVI.

*A Christian consideration concerning the Resurrection.*

*To the same person.*

**D**Earest brother, we will beg of the Lord, that he may have mercy on us, and that he will lead us into the  
V 2 power

power of the Resurrection, every one according to the measure of his illumination, by the quickning power of his spirit, by the benefit of whom all seeds do put forth their faculties in growing. For the natural life, faculty, understanding, wisdom, and sense do all tend to death in time, and though a man deluded by some fair shew, may imagine to himself an eternal permanency of these things, yet when the sun is risen to a burning strength, all these will dry up, or wither; nor is it possible for them to consist or abide the just judgment of God, as being that which melteth all down: yea furthermore the very discretion it self of the soul must dye likewise, as far as the natural man studyeth to preserve it, if that that man, according to the testimony of his conscience, is willing to satisfy the Law, least that soul do tumble down into utter destruction. Now because it is not the proper disposition of the natural man to lose any thing, but rather with the top of the life of the Soul, to preserve all things, therefore it is subjected to the divine judgment, that is, to death: and because he

is willing to conserve life in himself, and in his Soul ( now there is life no where but in God ) the soul cannot come at the true nourishment of life, but is to be delivered up to death, inasmuch as the natural man properly is death it self and belongeth to death. For they are bound up together into one body, and both, viz. the body from the soul, and on the other part the soul from the body are moved together, whether it be to grief, or to joy, yea though it be in the state of the highest knowledge, unto which the soul, according to the natural rule of life could possibly ascend. For she cannot be elevated higher in understanding, unless first as to her knowledge ( by which the natural man is informed by her ) she shall dye, so, as that it behooveth both soul and body, as one man, to dye, after that the spiritual conception is; now out of that deadned seed, is wont to spring forth a new plant, enriched with divine fruitfulness, which no death can touch any more, neither according to soul, nor according to body, because this generation, not of man, but without man, nor

out of his will, but without his will, not with hope, but without all hope, arriveth at the state of eternity, out of the eternal grace of God, so as that it is of God, and of life, always abiding, nor is it corruptible, even as also God is in his own nature. Every thing therefore returneth to that, out of which it first sprung, *viz.* the natural man, with its perfect body, and in its sphere, to death without any resurrection at all according to its own proper nature; and the supernatural man in its perfect sphere, to eternal life, abiding eternally in God, and yet as a Creature, but glorified in God. He who comes to this state cannot deny the truth of the thing: but he who partaketh nothing thereof, also as a natural man uttereth with truth, that he believeth that there is no resurrection, and although he should confess it, yet even that confession of the resurrection must dye, because unto the natural man, as such, there never (even eternally) belonged any resurrection; even as it is impossible for a seed sown, to come to a perfect death, unless it be wholly corrupted in its self. If therefore

it

it can be brought to pass, that a man can give up himself to death, with a hope of receiving forthwith another life, and as to that state, and according to that rule of his knowledge, wherein he is dead, a better (for no man can, whilst his present understanding is in being, attain to another understanding or life, unless the former be first dead) then indeed there would be no need to proceed to a further death, because it can only follow that which had been in being before. Now therefore there is here place for death, when by the benefit of corruption, through the operation of God, a new plant ariseth according to the nature of the corruption done, every thing according to its own kind, as there is example in all creatures, and in the corruptible propagation of them. So that by how much the more the natural man affirmeth that there is no more Resurrection, by so much the more he confirmeth it, because he truly is preparing himself for death, and uttereth publicly his Testimony concerning his corruption, and his eternal death: for there is to be no Resurrection of him: and thus also to

his, may (together with the Keepers whom the Pharisees set) a Testimony, concerning the Resurrection of Christ, be given, which also by this means is mightily confirmed for them, who stand in the very door to such a state, and do believe it. For when the Pharisees having sealed up the Sepulcher, had concluded, that they had shut up a kind of dead Corpse, and to have kept it in that pit of Death, the keepers of the Sepulcher, who yet were sent to do mischief, became witnesses of his Resurrection, although it is not believed to this very day, but by his Disciples ( by the Keepers is meant the natural man. ) My Brother, this my own true Epistle will clearly open to thee my mind, and will be to thee, as it were, the hand of a Dial which thou must well eye and consider, that thou maist likewise write back thy opinion to me, whereby it may appear, wherein we agree, and wherein we differ, if we are careful concerning this opinion. The Lord look upon us all in his mercy, and bring us into his own cleanness.

EPIST.

## E P I S T. XXVII.

*A faithful Admonition concerning the Resurrection of the Flesh.*

*To his Brother A. W.*

MY Brother, Let us go to that man, and let us set before him Death, and Life, Resurrection, and incorruptibility, all unfolded in their own degree and nature, and it shall be at his pleasure to make choice of any one of these. For if he shall choose nature in his life, then in good earnest he must perish in an eternal death, nor shall he ever arrive at such a life as he seeks: but if he will approach unto the truth (even as also the thing is) he shall live while he dieth, and he shall acknowledge the true Resurrection, which else is denied to him. My Brother, May God exhibit to him and to us his mercy, according to the variety of his compassions: nor may he ever leave us in our miseries, but remember us in this life subject to so many sufferings, in which we cry out laboriously unto the Lord with many sighs,

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that

that by his hand we may be promoted to incorruptibility ; which can by no means be effected, but by our death, which comprehends in it self the relinquishing of all those things, which we know by nature, and possess, and love, and in which we live. The power of death shall be known to all things living, but by so much the more difficulty, by how much the greater knowledge some have on this earth : for at the time of death, all things are to be given up to God, and then all things are shut up, and ended in the truth of God. The Lord unite us with himself, who himself is the beginning and end ; old and new ; yet is he one, and immutable, void of all increase in himself, though in the temporary creature, he is known with increase and decrease.

As much therefore as we depart from temporariness, so much are we united with God, in whom there is no time, and in him who is the last and the first, with an everlasting presence, and in him all Multiplication and Subtraction of time is taken away and made co-equal ; and all flesh, which is spiritualized, and which  
was

was wont to express it self in time, doth melt away before eternity. The Lord be merciful to us all, as of one flesh, that bidding farewell to that shadow of time, we may grow in his fear, and let his name be more and more sanctified over all his creatures in time, and let our life perish and vanish away like smoke, even as it is evidently done to all flesh : together with which, all things do tend to corruption, whatever it was that ever sprung from it, whether they were deeds, or whether there were thoughts. But it is not so with him, who is godly, for he, with all his works, is preserved, and will grow and live to Eternity, because every appetite, life, and desire of his, is nothing else but God, and therefore whatsoever is his, tendeth to Eternity. As on the contrary, the desire and scope of a worldly man, is nothing else but flesh, which alone doth also move and direct him : therefore the effect must perish with the cause, as experience testifies : for the fruit cannot be otherwise then is the root whence it is sprung. May our eternal Saviour Christ Jesus purifie us, that in him we may bring forth

forth true fruit, and according to the multitude of that his most abundant Grace, which God hath richly poured forth upon us, from the very beginning of the World, we may abide permanent in him. *Amen.*

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## E P I S T. XXVIII.

*Being a most beautiful Admonition, very profitable as unto the death and departure of Nature.*

*To a Sick Man.*

**I** Heartily salute thee in the Lord, most dear N. as to what concerneth thy disease, I hope the best of thee, according to the mercy of God, and that his hand was not in vain lifted up over thee. For he by his Discipline will lead and conserve us, that no rottenness shall grow in us, but that by his judgment we be still more and more purified, and cleansed from all impurity of Nature, bred with us and dead (still lurking in us.) The grace and mercy of the Lord be with thee, dearest N. in that thy misery and disease, which thou  
must

must bear in the flesh, and may he grant to thee true submission, and yielding up, under his hand, that with a bowed heart, thou maist bear all things in obedience to him, according to his holy will, concerning thy miserable self; that thou maist be lead in his way, with perseverance to his glory, and be preserved in the death of thy flesh, whereby the life of the spirit may from day to day, more and more increale in thee, and be manifested in the heart of thy dying body.

Moreover, I beg of the Lord, that he would strengthen thy Limbs for his service, so that if they become deficient as to Nature ( which yet must be done by continued labours in the way of the Lord that our essence may in time wax old, and decrease ) yet through Christ they may be raised again to an eternal, and fresh-springing youth in God, where no fainting, nor old age, nor death can touch them. The Lord preserve us, and his mercy be present with us, in all our adversity, lest perhaps that prove able to hinder us in our way, that our continued anxiety conjoyned with the highest danger,

ger, to which, in this combat, we must subject our selves, lest it be in vain, nor draweth us back, but rather may fruitfully promote us to a perpetual progression and success of his grace, and of divine benediction : maist thou remain recommended unto God, who will free us out of this present Dungeon of this temporary flesh, and imbecility, according to his own acceptable will ; will elevate us into the sublimity of Eternity, into the life of the spirit, through the Resurrection of Christ, to whom be the glory to all Eternity.

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## EPIST. XXIX.

*How a purified mind ought to bear without any commotion, the failings of his Neighbour with all patience.*

*To his Brother D. John W.*

**D**Earest Brother, that that man is affected with such streights, and with such griefs of heart, that we also must suffer together with him : For in that that he is alwaies subjected to sufferings, nor can come at any peace, is indeed not the  
work

work of man, but the gift of God, yea a great, and eminent gift to endure the folly of another, and to cover it over with an unvariable mind towards his Neighbour. For though we be unduely used or handled by our Neighbour, yet in truth a purified heart ought not to be moved by it, but must alwaies act according to the bond of Charity, which is alone its aim, for in that there ariseth no suspicion of evil, and although modest reason also may descend to make an excuse, yet even all that too must be alwaies done without any motion of mind, for as much as he is such a one as the injury and trouble of no creature can move him, because he remains confirmed in that which is truly unmovable.

Dearest Brother, I therefore write thus, that if that same trouble should be reiterated, thou maist alwaies have this aim fixed in thy sight. For although as to the creature the justice is on your part, yet the mind ought to remain alwaies free, without the use of this right, otherwise there would arise an enmity from thence, and a bitterness of heart : For thus, that  
which

which is earthly, overwhelmeth that which is heavenly with such a blindness, that it plainly seems to a man, that he hath some divine right; whenas yet God cannot but love, nor doth he require any other thing of us according to the measure of his Justice. Not as if I would willingly lay some blame upon thee, do I say thus, but that thy heart may not be, nor that any rule should be wanting to thee; if you behave your self otherwise, thou wilt be obnoxious to a heavier judgment, except thou proceedest with caution. My Brother, strive to have a mind unmoved, which cannot be hindred, but rather promoted by the enmity of the Creatures. All things to a just man turn to good, whether it be death, or life, or dissention, or love: for such a one, overlooking the Creature, taketh all, as from the Creator, whether they be grateful or ungrateful, and though we may not as yet come thus far, yet is this to be accounted for a rule, and to be followed with all endeavour. And with this I would have thee recommended to the Lord, who will be helpful to us all, and keep and promote

us all more and more in his own way.

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## EPIST. XXX.

*How a Noble Plant springeth up out of the Dead Seed, through the Divine fruitfulness.*

*To his Brother A. W.*

**D**ear est Brother! The Herb we have received, The omnipotent Lord who from his eternal beaming forth hath made to come forth the out-flowing powers of all his Creatures, according to the common and out-streaming operation of the Law of Nature, replenish thine and the common emptiness of others, with increase in the blessing of the most noble Plant of God, according to his nature, that that only Seed, which by the benefit of corruption hath utterly lost all its own propriety, in a deadly and eternal intemperance, and is eternally united with the earth of an imperferutable perfection, will fructifie in thee through God, contrary to all hope or glory, to the greater

ter glorification in the vertue of God.

Moreover my Brother, we received all, which are to be brought back again to God, as to the Original of all, with thansgiving even unto the scope of our death. Thus we miserable wretches in this our received way, are saln down into that, which we call our propriety, so that when we are to depart from that our assumed life, we are overwhelmed with sorrows and bitterness; although all this is done out of the just judgment of God, that all may come unto his truth, even as the heavens and the earth are called unto the truth, because undeniably all things must come to this state; and to render their source glorified by their death, and by their being melted down thereinto. I wish thee my small portion of health in my state of rejection and disertion from the Lord, which I suffer, but yet not without mercy; that, which may happen also to thee, but with real commiseration, according to thy calling, as also to all that are the holy ones of God. My brother, be mindful of us all, may the mercy of God and  
his

his eternal, and (to all creatures) his incomprehensible grace come upon us with plenty, that by the virtue thereof, that miracle of the supernatural, spiritual, and eternal life may be discovered and acknowledged, together with the spiritual salvation in Christ, his eternal, and only begotten son, in whom miserable we are depressed down into death with verity.

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## EPIST. XXXI.

*Concerning the right uncloathing of self, and of the yielding up of the soul in all sufferings.*

**D**Earest brother, The Lord be mindful of our misery, and first to behold me the most miserable one, with commiseration, and offer to himself my heart made bare and emptied by many pressings together, and that he will remunerate it with the blessing of fruitfulness, in a divine and eternal redemption, and freedom from all the Enemies of my heart, who hold it captive in the chaines  
of

of darknes, out of the just judgment of God, to whom I am subjected, being ignorant, whither at last I must go hence, seeing that my anxiety, the longer it is, is so much the more vehement, so that I must always fall into the hands of the Lord, seeing all else are fallen away from me. The Lord look upon my nakedness, and be my preserver, that being kept up by and in him, I may bring forth fruit to his glory, and to the sanctification of things temporaneous, in the effusion of the blood of my own proper life, and in the liberty of the divine obedience. With these I recommend thee to the Lord, who can advance us higher in his ways, and can fasten us firmly to the cross in true submission and yielding up of our wills, that in him we may be kept safe all that short space of our faintings in this time, being in his fear delivered up unto death, according to the ordination of his judgment impending over us, that so we may be led and get forwards in his ways and that we may bid farewell with all our might to time, that eternity may take place in us, and that we may lodye

to

to our selves, that we may walk here on the earth only as Pilgrims. The Omnipotent God deal with us in his good pleasure, according to his mercy, and lead us thorough with Victory, even in our imbecillity unto the very end.

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## EPIST. XXXII.

*Concerning the death of all created things,  
and of all those which are born out of  
them.*

**M**Ost beloved brother! All things do tend to the end, and death of their created nature, whence do arise many sighs and a most bitter agony. But the Lord will again bring forth his holy one out of death and the grave, that he may not see corruption. My brother, thy pressure is great and severe: I know thou desirest comfort, but from God only, who cannot come, but thorough the death of all creatures, or of the whole created nature; until the last breath of life be also breathed out, nor can any refreshment of members be hoped for. Let us in a  
free

free communion be made partakers of thy sufferings, with divine compassion, patiently expecting the accomplishment of the judgment in its own order; furthermore we will labour according to the will of God, and we will sweat till we come to the appointed end, even as the hand of the Lord shall over rule us. May the omnipotent Lord, by his fatherly grace lead us thorough this most difficult labour, and strengthen us according to the inward man, that we may forsake that which is external, and deliver it up to eternal corruption, from out of the first judgment, to his eternal praise and glory, to which we all aspire every one of us according to his own manner and service, but not for our sakes, or for our commodity, as some now unjustly do, and think: wherefore also this counterfeit opinion shall sink down into defect and death together with the death of the creature, by a most hard and terrible fall. Because all that, that we possess with a lye, in time, must be yielded up to the eternal truth, but all to the glory of God, so that at length, one may become a looking-

ing-glass to the other, and God at last may overcome all, and persist alone, but we in our lies must perish. My brother, the times of our parents, and forefathers are passed, and labor belongeth now to our time, to the end also of which, all things preparatory are at hand. The Lord stretch out his hand with mercy, overwretched me, and over us all, that we may be taken into the order which is pleasing to him, thorough faith, under the obedience of his eternal will, so that our will, life, and choice being subjected to his judgment, may be condemned and consumed. May the Lord give to us all, communion in God, with a consideration of eternity, according to his unspeakable mercy. Moreover my brother, as to my state or condition, that abideth in perpetual agony of death, with most sharp persecution, performed within me, after various manners, yet to one only end, for whose sake all must be done. What the Lord may in time do with me, is known only to himself, and his eternal decree. But which way soever I turn my self, and whatsoever I consider or behold

behold, nothing but a vast abyſs, and a parching heat of all miſery do continually repreſent themſelves to my eyes. The Lord in his commiſeration lead moſt wretched me, by his fatherly hand, thorough things preſent and to come in this unknown, uncertain, deſert, and deſolate condition: yet I give thanks to his goodneſs that under this his powerful hand, he revealeth to me his fatherly mind. The Lord be my helper, and my conductor in all things, and keep me, and teach me in his School, and under his diſcipline. His grace be over us all, together with his unſpeakable mercy, *Amen.*

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### EPIST XXXIII.

*How ignorant Nature will ſtumble in much diſputing, and will condemn its neighbour: alſo how the ſenſe of all Scriptures ought to be apprehended in our own ſelves under the croſs.*

**M**Oſt beloved N. I pray the Lord, that he will promote thee in his way, in which thou mayeſt follow moſt di-

diligently his will, without much disputing by which the flesh, rather then God's spirit hath to do; we therefore must lay out our time with more advantage. For when, for the most part, we think to speak from the spirit of God, perchance nature, lurketh under the fair show of the spirit, so long as we are still cloathed about with flesh: so that when we least believe it, yet we then account of the flesh instead of the spirit. Therefore we are to walk before the Lord with fear, without any bold disputings, and we must beware, as much as in us lyes, to walk innocently before God, and before men, lest we fall into our own condemnation, whilst we are condemning others, if not in words, yet in heart. Moreover most dear N. that writing which I received pleaseth me well, although I have not read it thorough so accurately, by reason of the weakness of my head: For though I cannot truly reach the sense of any writings, unless I can apprehend the virtue of them in my own self under the cross, whence the true fruit is manifested, seeing I tread no further, then unto the state in which I then consist, by

suffering I always follow the steps of Christ, where the latter always discover the defect and imperfection of the former: Yet let every man mind his own calling, and observe it diligently, so all in time will clearly appear, and come forth into the light. Salute P. N. our friend heartily: God will look upon him to his advantage, and will make his dayly sighings fruitful thorough his eternal mercy, which we are all to expect, none excepted. The Lord endow thee with wisdom and prudence, that thou mayest act aright in all things, and that thou mayest walk before him with trembling. There are books enough for us to look into, if we will but perpetually observe our own consciences, that we may most accurately follow their dictates. Moreover thorough the providence of God we have the Old and New Testament for our only external rule, but the holy spirit, above all these, for our alone master, or Teacher. Blessed is he who is deprived of his own proper wisdom, and is instructed and instigated by the spirit of the Lord alone. The Lord be with thee and with us. *Amen.*

EPIST.

## EPIST. XXXIV.

*Concerning a certain danger that hung over that place, by reason of persecution, unto which he was about to go.*

**D**ear<sup>est</sup> Brother, may the Omnipotent Lord preserve my mortified body according to his mercy in his divine will. I have purposed to go to that place, and to expect the will of God concerning me, beseeching him from the most inward and deepest bottom of my soul, that he will set me before the enemy, and that the remnant of my life, which is very small, may not tend to the destruction, but to the salvation of any one, this I beg from his eternal goodness and mercy, withal hoping, that this danger will prove destruction to me only, and will go no further. The Lord make known his will to me in this one desire of mine, according to his compassion. If the Lord shall suffer me in this tabernacle, tolerably to pass through, so as still to subsist, as I have occasion I shall signify it to thee. But my brother which way soever I turn my self, or look  
back

back, all things renounce me, and of the present there remains no place more for me. And therefore I convert my self to that, which the forsaking of all creatures sheweth unto me. The Omnipotent God take care to secure me under his own protection.

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### E P I S T. XXXV.

*An answer sent to his brother, concerning a woman that dyed, also concerning his own condition, together with a devout exhortation.*

**M**ost beloved brother, a real grief hath possessed me, for the departure of that woman out of this temporary world. I trust in the Lord that all will be done for a good end, and from him I expect peace, and tranquillity, with commiserating grace, which we all hunt after, and heartily seek for our Souls, together with an expectation of an eternity to come. I find in my heart, that I am now obliged to her children, and I love them with a true tendency of mind, according to my poor slender ability. May the

the Lord for his mercy-sake turn all for the better. Moreover as to what concerns my condition, the same kind of bonds do always hold me bound, according to the will of God, in a disease and an infirmity. So long as it shall please the Lord: May he direct my ways, and bow them down under his fear, in the obedience of his most holy will: and may he bestow freely his grace on us all, that we may continue our lives in righteousness with devotion, and a diligent observation of all our works and counsels, least in all our actions, there be somewhat found, that is contrary to the will of God. May the Lord give his grace to us all, that we may go forwards in his way, and bear such fruit as may be pleasing to him.

*In the eight following Epistles, is somewhat described of that great misery, into which the Lord cast him a little before his death.*

## I.

**M**Y brother, my body liath an increase of some strength, just as a man groweth, but very slowly, so that it can scarcely be observed, though yet

back, all things renounce me, and of the present there remains no place more for me. And therefore I convert my self to that, which the forsaking of all creatures sheweth unto me. The Omnipotent God take care to secure me under his own protection.

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## I.

**M**Y brother, my body liath an increase of some strength, just as a man groweth, but very slowly, so as it can scarcely be observed, though yet it

medeth on. Yet is the purpose of God  
 known to me, although like a pestife-  
 rous cloud, a many difficulties and sor-  
 rows are set before my eyes, out of which  
 I see no deliverance, but by death,  
 by which I may wholly penetrate even un-  
 der the stone: which will come to pass, if the  
 Lord shall prove prosperous, yea and fur-  
 so, of all means shall fail me. The  
 Lord prepare us all, that we may be,  
 fit for his work, in those things,  
 which he himself seeth, and judgeth.

## II.

My brother, the condition of my body is  
 the same, as it always was, but I remain  
 firm in my heart, and the trust or  
 confidence of my life is so small, by reason  
 of the want of strength in my limbs, that I can  
 hardly walk up and down the house, with  
 the assistance of my hand under the hand of my God.  
 Indeed I remain like others, as to  
 outward appearance, but at heart, and  
 in my original and root of life, there im-  
 perfect judgment, and by my unconfider-  
 ation thorough the terrours of death,

it threatneth an end, and my departure out of this time: such is the constitution of my whole life, way, and conversation. May the merciful Father open the bowels of his paternal inclination to me, a most wretched creature, that he may keep me safe from the evil one, and preserve us all by his eternal grace. Be mindful of forsaken and forlorn me, as my compassionate brother, if perhaps the Lord may be willing to exhibit his mercy to us.

### III.

My brother, mine accustomed infirmity still remaineth, as long as the Lord will. The Lord be my promoter in his commiserating grace, and may he preserve me, and continue to hold me in his discipline, under a suffering obedience of his holy will. The cause why I have wrote no more is the weakness of my hand. According to the Lord my writing is not necessary to thee, seeing that he himself will operate by his own grace in thy heart, thorough the influence of his Spirit, from whom all words, and all writings, may

proceedeth on. Yet is the purpose of God unknown to me, although like a pestiferous cloud, a many difficulties and sorrows are set before my eyes, out of which I can spy no deliverance, but by death, that so I may wholly penetrate even unto God: which will come to pass, if the times shall prove prosperous, yea and further also, of all means shall fail me. The Lord prepare us all, that we may be, made fit for his work, in those things, which he himself seeth, and judgeth.

## II.

My brother, the condition of my body is tolerable, as it always was, but I remain unshaken in my heart, and the trust or confidence of my life is so small, by reason of want of strength in my limbs, that I can only walk up and down the house, with trembling under the hand of my God. True indeed I remain like others, as to outward appearance, but at heart, and over my original and root of life, there impends a judgment, and by my unconsidered steps thorough the terrors of death,

it threatneth an end, and my departure out of this time: such is the constitution of my whole life, way, and conversation. May the merciful Father open the bowels of his paternal inclination to me, a most wretched creature, that he may keep me safe from the evil one, and preserve us all by his eternal grace. Be mindful of forsaken and forlorn me, as my compassionate brother, if perhaps the Lord may be willing to exhibit his mercy to us.

## III.

My brother, mine accustomed infirmity still remaineth, as long as the Lord will. The Lord be my promoter in his commiserating grace, and may he preserve me, and continue to hold me in his discipline, under a suffering obedience of his holy will. The cause why I have wrote no more is the weakness of my hand. According to the Lord my writing is not necessary to thee, seeing that he himself will operate by his own grace in thy heart, thorough the influence of his Spirit, from whom all words, and all writings may

be separated, by reason of his immense and glorious claritude. The Lord keep and promote you all in his ways, under his fear, and likewise us, thorough all the time of our earthly combat. And so I heartily salute you.

#### IV.

My brother, as to what belongs to my condition, it still conflicts with its usual and difficult disease, so long as it shall so please God: He, according to the order of his Justice, put me down into this death of corruption, and with his own hand plucketh me up again, that I may wait for eternity, which springeth up from out of the seed of this corruptible mortality. May the Lord freely bestow on us all his mercy, as, with a long-suffering constancy, we hope from the Lord it will be, that with a heart prepared, and submitted, we may receive all from his hand, and may be lead thorough, even unto the end. Herewith I recommend thee to the Lord, who will lead us all, with all our strength, and essence, unto the true death.

death in Christ, that he out of this  
may build up an eternal life, which  
never more be subjected unto any

## V

My brother, my condition is the same  
that it was, when you departed: the  
consideration thereof doth shake all my  
powers, into a trembling, and a fear,  
because of that evident death, by the  
of the Lord, which as it were an  
cloud of death, I have always before  
eyes, even from that very time  
thou wert with me: the reason  
its beginning, and of its end is  
hid from me: the truth it self will  
it self forth in its own meaning and order.  
As to my outward body, which respect  
eth my disease, I am not at all changed,  
but anguishes have taken full possession  
on all my faculties. Be thou recommended  
to the mercy of God.

## V I.

My brother, The Lord help us

be separated, by reason of his immense and glorious claritude. The Lord keep and promote you all in his ways, under his fear, and likewise us, thorough all the time of our earthly combat. And so I heartily salute you.

## IV.

My brother, as to what belongs to my condition, it still conflicts with its usual and difficult disease, so long as it shall so please God: He, according to the order of his Justice, put me down into this death of corruption, and with his own hand plucketh me up again, that I may wait for eternity, which springeth up from out of the seed of this corruptible mortality. May the Lord freely bestow on us all his mercy, as, with a long-suffering constancy, we hope from the Lord it will be, that with a heart prepared, and submitted, we may receive all from his hand, and may be lead thorough, even unto the end. Herewith I recommend thee to the Lord, who will lead us all, with all our strength, and essence, unto the true death.

death in Christ, that he out of this  
may build up an eternal life, which  
never more be subjected unto any danger

## V

My brother, my condition is the same  
that it was, when you departed: but the  
consideration thereof doth shake all my  
powers, into a trembling, and a terror,  
because of that evident death, by the hand  
of the Lord, which as it were an obscure  
cloud of death, I have always before my  
eyes, even from that very time when  
thou wert with me: the reason being  
its beginning, and of its end is wholly  
hid from me: the truth it self will bring  
it self forth in its own meaning and order.  
As to my outward body, which respect-  
eth my disease, I am not at all changed,  
but anguishes have taken full possession  
on all my faculties. Be thou recommend-  
ed to the mercy of God.

## V I.

My brother, The Lord help us poor  
X 5 wretches

in this dangerous condition of  
 mortal, and mutable life, whom it  
 is to be kept with believing un-  
 certainties, in the fear of God,  
 to the faith, whereby we be-  
 come all the certainty, and firmness of  
 our hopes are to be wholly destroyed,  
 and annihilated, that another  
 may spring up, to eternal life,  
 coming out of the foregoing corruptible  
 the Lord grant to us his salvation,  
 that we may adore, or worship  
 in Spirit, and in Truth, even as he him-  
 self.

## V I I.

The Lord in his mercy help us all, and  
 free us from our errours, in his own time.  
 For our wretch do suffer the justice of  
 his law, and do bear his judgment upon  
 us, as long as this carnal spirit, in this my  
 nature, still breatheth. May the eter-  
 nal merciful God appear to me by his  
 will, and to us all, and lead us into his  
 will.

## V I I I.

brother, The Lord is my deliverer

in my necessity, and will continue  
 grace even unto the end. My brother  
 willing thou shouldest know that  
 dy cannot possibly endure any longer  
 immense misery, without dying.  
 sist me in my sufferings to the last  
 ceive me into his eternal rest. My  
 ness is great, all things are known  
 Lord. Thy brother in the highest  
 the most wretched in the Lord.

*To his Sister the ninth day before*

**D**EAREST Sister, whilst I am writing  
 I am so ordered, that I can write no  
 more. My dearest sister, be mindful of  
 your younger brother, and of his wife and  
 children, that they may be the most  
 comforted and helped as the time may need.  
 most beloved Sister, I am in the  
 content in the Lord my God.  
 his grace do bid the farewell with  
 dying hand; being according to  
 God bound in so short a chain  
 proposed to himself. The Lord  
 grant peace to our beloved brother

watches in this dangerous condition of this natural, and mutable life, whom it behooveth to be kept with believing under all uncertainties, in the fear of God, according to the faith, whereby we believe that all the certainty, and firmness of our purposes are to be wholly destroyed, corrupted, and annihilated, that another new fruit may spring up, to eternal life, as arising out of the foregoing corruptible seed. The Lord grant to us his salvation, and grace, that we may adore, or worship him in Spirit, and in Truth, even as he himself desireth.

## V II.

The Lord in his mercy help us all, and free us from our errours, in his own time. For I poor wretch do suffer the justice of the Lord, and do bear his judgment upon me, as long as this carnal spirit, in this my dying nature, still breatheth. May the eternal and merciful God appear to me by his grace, yea and to us all, and lead us into his own will.

## V III.

My brother, The Lord is my deliverer

in my necessity, and will confirm me in his grace even unto the end. My brother, I am willing thou shouldest know that my body cannot possibly endure any longer this immense misery, without dying. God assist me in my sufferings to the last, and receive me into his eternal rest. My Weakness is great, all things are known to the Lord. Thy brother in the highest streights, the most wretched in the Lord.

M. W.

*To his Sister the ninth day before his death.*

**D**EAREST Sister, whilst I am writing this, I am so ordered, that I can write no more. My dearest sister, be mindful of thy younger brother, and of his wife and small children, that they may be the most advanced and helped as the time may need. My most beloved Sister, I am in the highest content in the Lord my God, and by his grace do bid the farewell with this my dying hand; being according to the will God bound in so short a chain, as he proposed to himself. The Lord our God grant peace to our beloved brothers and sisters!

And now I turn me to my pre-  
 sent, viz. to that eternal peace thro-  
 the death of my flesh, which now  
 it self to its end. And now my  
 beloved Sister, behold my dying  
 and my last farewell to thee  
 the bottom of my heart; where-  
 salureth thee, as departing out of  
 thy brother.

M. W.

in the Lord  
 in the year  
 Lord 1560. and  
 own age the 39.

16 April. 1560

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THE END.

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Sisters! And now I turn me to my present call, viz. to that eternal peace thorough the death of my flesh, which now hasteneth it self to its end. And now my most beloved Sister, behold my dying salutation, and my last farewell to thee from the bottom of my heart; where, with saluteth thee, as departing out of this life, thy brother.

M. W.

*He died in the Lord  
25 April in the year  
of our Lord 1560. and  
of his own age the 39.*

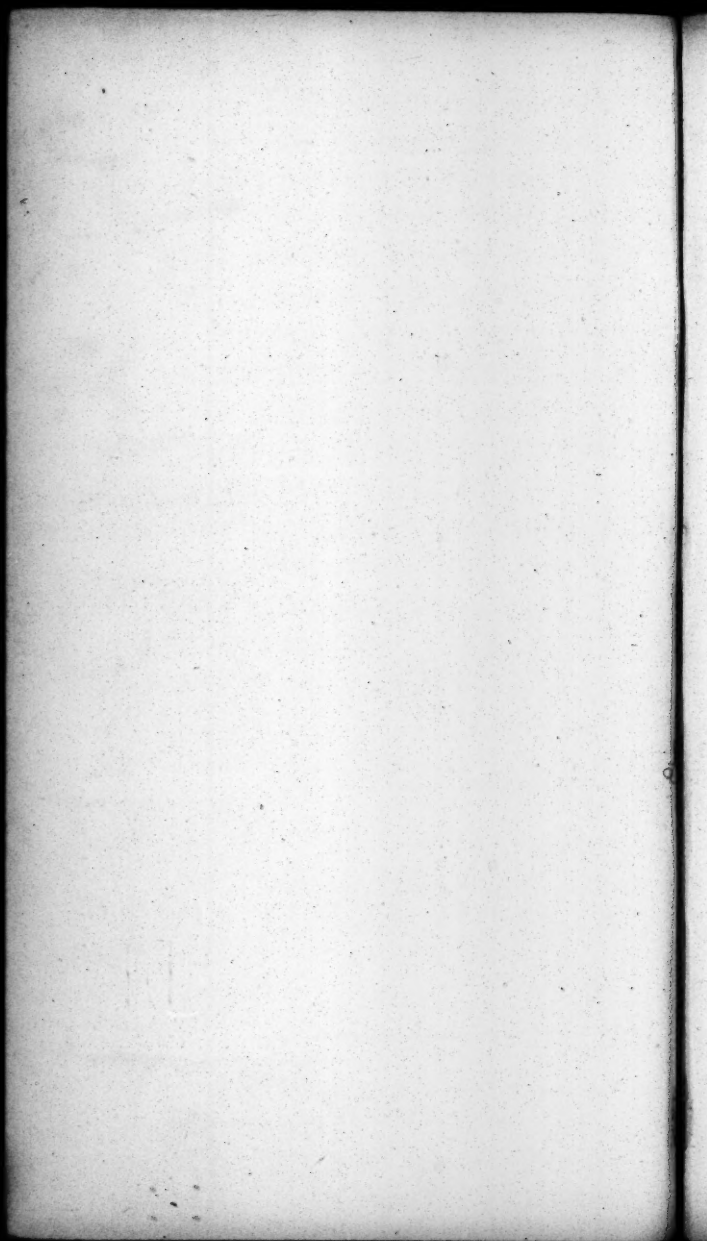
16 April. 1560.

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THE END.

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